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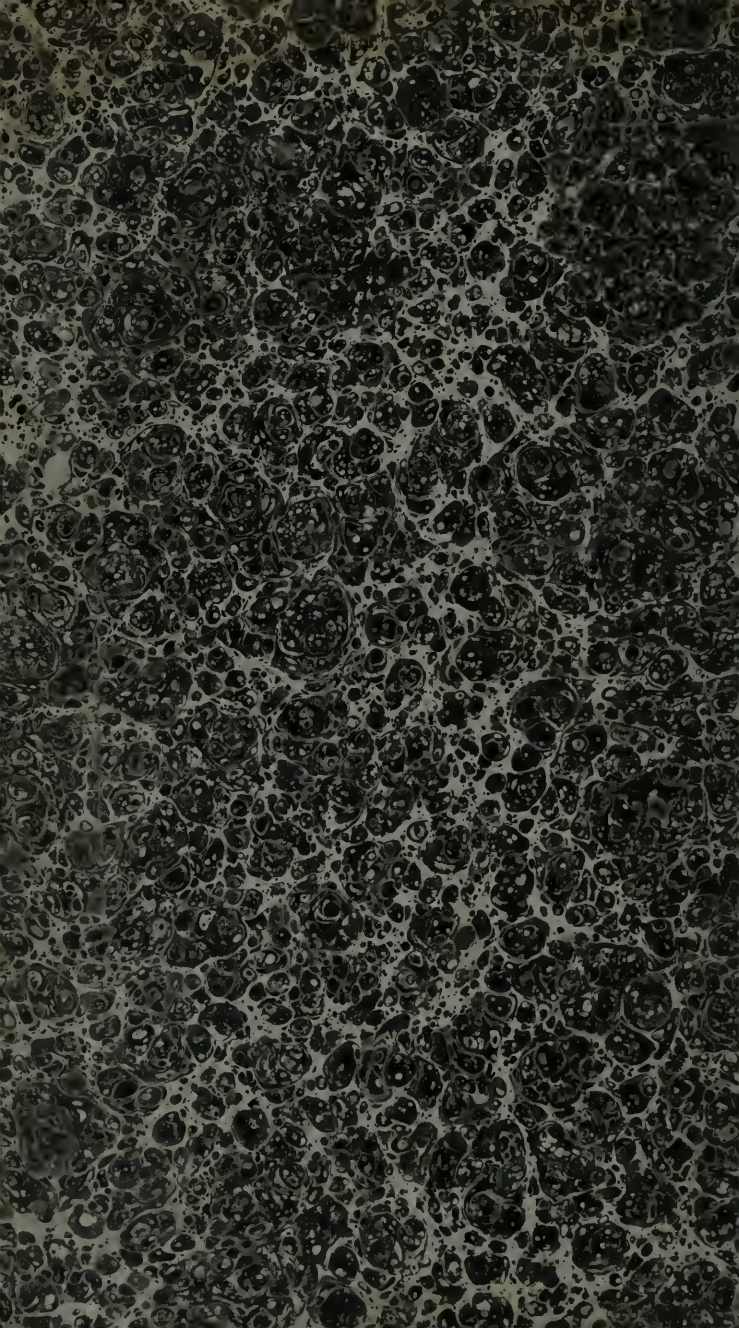

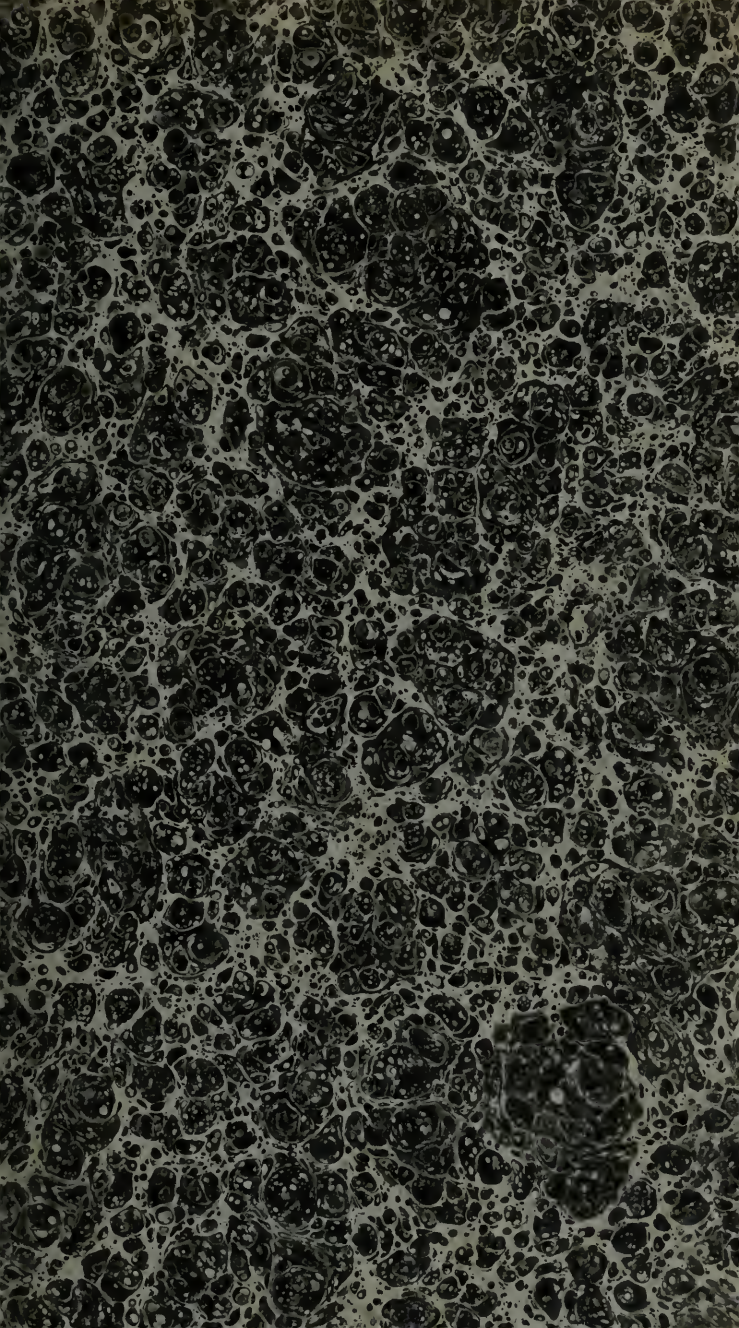

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OLD BALLADS,

HISTORICAL AND NARRATIVE,

WITH SOME OF MODERN DATE;

COLLECTED FROM RARE COPIES AND MSS.

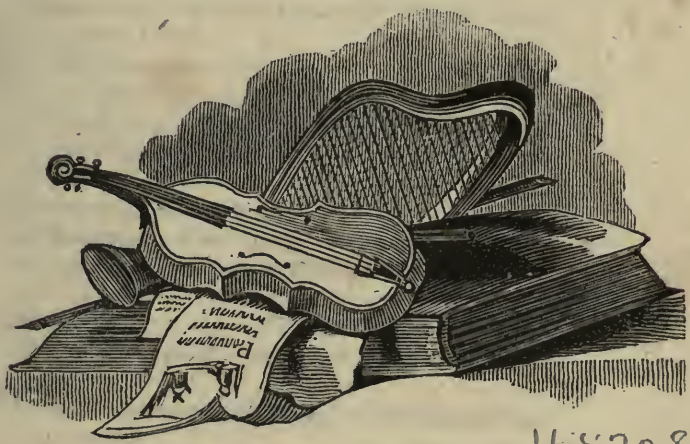
BY THOMAS EVANS.

A NEW EDITION,

REVISED AND CONSIDERABLY ENLARGED FROM PUBLIC AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS, BY HIS SON,

R. H. EVANS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.——VOL. II.



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EVANS'S COLLECTION

OF

OLD BALLADS.

I.

An Old Ballad of a Duke of Cornwall's Daughter; who, after her marriage to a King of Albion, was divorced for the sake of a favourite Mistress: and her exemplary revenge on them both.

The facts upon which this Ballad is founded, may be seen in "The British History, translated into English from the Latin of Jeffrey of Monmouth: by Aaron Thompson, Oxon. 1718, 8vo. p 42." Among the Plays falsely attributed to Shakespeare, is one upon the same subject.

WHEN Humber in his wrathful rage
King Albanact in field had slain,
Whose bloody broils for to assuage,
King Locrin then applied his pain;
And with a host of Britons stout,
At length he found king Humber out:

At vantage great he met him then,
And with his host beset him so,
That he destroy'd his warlike men,
And Humber's power did overthrow;
And Humber, which for fear did fly,
Leapt into a river desp'rately;

And being drowned in the deep,
He left a lady there alive,
Which sadly did lament and weep,
For fear they should her life deprive.
But by her face that was so fair,
The king was caught in Cupid's snare:

He took this lady to his love,
Who secretly did keep it still;
So that the queen did quickly prove
The king did bear her most good will:
Which though by wedlock late begun,
He had by her a gallant son.

Queen Guendolin was griev'd in mind,
To see the king was alter'd so:
At length the cause she chanc'd to find,
Which brought her to much bitter woe.
For Estrild was his joy (God wot)
By whom a daughter he begot.

The Duke of Cornwall being dead,
The father of that gallant queen:
The king with lust being overlaid,
His lawful wife he cast off clean:
Who with her dear and tender son,
For succour did to Cornwall run.

Then Locrin crowned Estrild bright,
And made of her his lawful wife:
With her which was his heart's delight,
He sweetly thought to lead his life.
Thus Guendolin, as one forlorn,
Did hold her wretched life in scorn.

But when the Cornish men did know
The great abuse she did endure,
With her a number great did go,
Which she by prayer did procure.
In battle then they march'd along,
For to redress this grievous wrong.

And near a river called Store,
The king with all his host she met;
Where both the armies fought full sore,
But yet the queen the field did get:
Yet ere they did the conquest gain,
The king was with an arrow slain.

Then Guendolin did take in hand
Until her son was come to age,
The government of all the land:
But first her fury to assuage,
She did command her soldiers wild,
To drown both Estrild and her child.

Incontinent then did they bring
Fair Estrild to the river-side,
And Sabrine, daughter to a king,
Whom Guendolin could not abide;
Who being bound together fast,
Into the river there were cast:

And ever since that running stream
Wherein the ladies drowned were,
Is called Severn through the realm,
Because that Sabrine died there.
Thus those that did to lewdness bend,
Were brought unto a woful end.

II.

The noble Acts of King Arthur, and the Knights of the Round Table; with the valiant Atchievements of Sir Lancelot du Lake.

Arthur, the son of Uter and Igren, the Dutchess of Cornwall, was crowned King of Britain about the year 516, and in the fifteenth of his age. After a reign of twenty-six years, Mordred, the son of Lotho, who pretended to his crown, marched out against him with his army: And they encountered at a place, then called Kamblan, in Cornwall, where our hero slew him with his own hand; and at the same time received his death's wound from him. From the field of battle he was carried to Glastenbury in Somersetshire, where he died the twenty-first of May, in the year 542, and and was buried in that church-yard. They tell us, that his body was found 600 years after, under the reign of King Henry the Second, 16 foot under ground; and near him the body of Guenever his queen. Tradition tells us, that King Arthur created 24 knights of the order, himself making the 25th; though our poet has thought fit to double the number. At Winchester they show this round table, hanging in the great hall where the Saxon kings usually feasted. This hall is supported by marble pillars in the king's house, on the west side of that city. The table itself is of one solid piece of wood, and round it are cut several names in the Saxon characters; though I believe no one legible, save that of Lancelot.

WHEN Arthur first in court began,
And was approved king;
By force of arms great victories won,
And conquest home did bring:

Then into Britain straight he came,
Where fifty good and able
Knights then repaired unto him,
Which were of the round table.

And many justs and tournaments,
Before them that were dress'd;
Where valiant knights did them excel,
And far surmount the rest:

But one Sir Lancelot du Lake,
Who was approved well;
He in his fights and deeds of arms
All others did excel.

When he had rested him awhile,
To play, to game, and sport;
He thought he would go try himself
In some adventrous sort:

He armed rode in forest wide,
And met a damsel fair,
Who told him of adventures great;
Whereto he gave good ear.

Why should I not, quoth Lancelot tho,
For that cause I came hither?
Thou seem'st, quoth she, a knight right good,
And I will bring thee thither:

Whereas the mighty knight doth dwell,
That now is of great fame:
Therefore tell me what knight thou art,
And then what is your name?

My name is Lancelot du Lake.
Quoth she, it likes me then;
Here dwells a knight that never was
E'er match'd with any man;

Who has in prison threescore knights,
And four that he has wound;
Knights of King Arthur's court they be,
And of his table round.

She brought him to a river side,
And also to a tree,
Whereon a copper bason hung,
His fellow shields to see.

He struck so hard, the bason broke.
When Tarquin heard the sound,
He drove a horse before him straight,
Whereon a knight lay bound.

Sir Knight, then said Sir Lanc'lot, tho,
Bring me that horse-load hither,
And lay him down, and let him rest;
We'll try our force together.

And as I understand thou hast,
So far as thou art able,
Done great despite and shame unto
The knights of the round table.

If thou be of the table round,
(Quoth Tarquin speedily)
Both thee and all thy fellowship
I utterly defy.

That's overmuch, quoth Lancelot tho,
Defend thee by and by.
They put their spurs unto their steeds,
And each at other fly;

They couch'd their spears, and horses ran
As though there had been thunder;
And each struck them amidst the shield,
Wherewith they broke in sunder:

Their horses backs brake under them;
The knights were both aston'd:
To void their horses they made haste,
To light upon the ground.

They took them to their shields full fast,
Their swords they drew out then;
With mighty strokes most eagerly
Each one at other run.

They wounded were, and bled full sore,
For breath they both did stand;
And leaning on their swords awhile,
Quoth Tarquin, hold thy hand;

And tell to me what I shall ask.
Say on, quoth Lancelot tho.
Thou art, quoth Tarquin, the best knight
That ever I did know,

And like a knight that I did hate;
So that thou be not he,
I will deliver all the rest,
And eke accord with thee.

That is well said, quoth Lancelot then;
But sith it must be so,
What is the knight thou hatest thus,
I pray thee to me show?

His name is Lancelot du Lake;
He slew my brother dear;
Him I suspect of all the rest;
I would I had him here.

Thy wish thou hast, but yet unknown,
I am Lancelot du Lake,
Now knight of Arthur's table round,
Kind Haud's son of Scuwake:

And I desire thee do thy worst.
Ho, ho, quoth Tarquin, tho
One of us two shall end our lives
Before that we do go.

If thou be Lancelot du Lake,
Then welcome shalt thou be;
Wherefore see thou thyself defend,
For now I defy thee.

They buckled then together so,
Like two wild boars rushing,
And with their swords and shields they ran
At one another flashing:

The ground besprinkled was with blood,
Tarquin began to faint;
For he gave back, and bore his shield
So low he did repent.

Then soon 'spied Sir Lancelot tho,
He leapt upon him then,
He pull'd him down upon his knee,
And rushing off his helm;

And when he struck his neck in two:
And when he had done so,
From prison, threescore knights and four
Lancelot deliver'd tho.

III.

KING ALFRED AND THE SHEPHERD.

With the Humours of Gillian, the Shepherd's Wife.

In elder times there was of yore,
When gibes of churlish glee
Were us'd among our country carls,
Tho' no such thing now be.
The which king Alfred liking well,
Forsook his stately court,
And in disguise unknown went forth,
To see that jovial sport;

How Dick and Tom, in clouted shoon,
And coats of russet gray,
Esteem'd themselves more brave than them
That went in golden ray,
In garments fit for such a life
The good king Alfred went,
Ragged and torn as from his back
The beggar his cloaths had rent.

A sword and buckler good and strong,
To give Jack Sauce a rap;
And on his head, instead of a crown,
He wore a Monmouth cap.
Thus coasting through Somersetshire,
Near Newton-court he met
A shepherd swain of lusty limb,
That up and down did jet:

He wore a bonnet of good gray,
Close button'd to his chin;
And at his back a leather scrip,
With much good meat therein.
God speed, good shepherd, quoth the king;
I come to be thy guest,
To taste of thy good victuals here,
And drink that's of the best:

Thy scrip, I know, hath cheer good store:
What then? the shepherd said;
Thou seem'st to be some some sturdy thief,
And mak'st me sore afraid:
Yet if thou wilt thy dinner win,
Thy sword and buckler take;
And, if thou can'st, into my scrip
Therewith an entrance make.

I tell thee, roister, it hath store
Of beef, and bacon fat,
With sheaves of barley-bread, to make
Thy chaps to water at:
Here stands my bottle, here my bag,
If thou can'st win them, roister:
Against thy sword and buckler here,
My sheep-hook is my master.

Benedicite, quoth our good king;
It never shall be said
That Alfred of the shepherd's hook
Will stand a whit afraid.
So soundly thus they both fell to't,
And giving bang for bang;
At every blow the shepherd gave,
King Alfred's sword cried twang.

His buckler prov'd his chiefest fence;
For still the shepherd's hook
Was that the which king Alfred could
In no good manner brook,
At last, when they had fought four hours,
And it grew just mid-day,
And wearied, both, with right good-will
Desir'd each other's stay:

A truce, I crave, quoth Alfred then;
Good shepherd hold thy hand;
A sturdier fellow than thyself
Lives not within the land:
Nor a lustier roister than thou art,
The churlish shepherd said:
To tell thee plain, thy thievish look
Now makes my heart afraid.

Else sure thou art some prodigal,
Which hast consum'd thy store,
And now com'st wand'ring in this place,
To rob and steal for more.
Deem not of me then, quoth our king,
Good shepherd, in this sort;
A gentleman well known I am
In good king Alfred's court.

The devil thou art, the shepherd said;
Thou go'st in rags all torn;
Thou rather seems't, I think, to be
Some beggar basely born:
But if thou wilt mend thy estate,
And here a shepherd be;
At night, to Gillian, my sweet wife,
Thou shalt go home with me:

For she's as good a toothless dame,
As mumbleth on brown bread;
Where thou shalt lie in hurden sheets,
Upon a fresh straw bed.
Of whig and whey we have good store,
And keep good pease-straw fire;
And now and then good barley cakes,
As better days require.

But for my master, which is chief,
And lord of Newton-court,
He keeps, I say, his shepherd swains
In far more braver sort;
We there have curds and clouted cream,
Of red cow's morning milk;
And now and then fine butter'd cakes,
As soft as any silk.

Of beef and reised bacon store,
That is most fat and greasy,
We have likewise to feed our chaps,
And make them glib and easy.
Thus if thou wilt my man become,
This usage thou shalt have;
If not, adieu; go hang thyself;
And so farewell, Sir Knave.

King Alfred hearing of this glee
The churlish shepherd said,
Was well content to be his man;
So they a bargain made:
A penny round the shepherd gave,
In earnest of this match,
To keep his sheep in field and fold,
As shepherds use to watch.

His wages shall be full ten groats,
For service of a year;
Yet was it not his use, old lad,
To hire a man so dear:
For did the king himself, quoth he,
Unto my cottage come,
He should not, for a twelve-month's pay,
Receive a greater sum.

Hereat the bonny king grew blithe,
To hear the clownish jest;
How silly sots, as custom is,
Do descant at the best.
But not to spoil the foolish sport,
He was content, good king,
To fit the shepherd's humour right
In every kind of thing.

A sheep-hook then, with Patch his dog,
And tar-box by his side,
He, with his master, cheek by joll,
Unto old Gillian hied.
Into whose sight no sooner come;
Whom have you here? quoth she;
A fellow, I doubt, will cut our throats;
So like a knave looks he.

Not so, old dame, quoth Alfred straight,
Of me you need not fear;
My master hir'd me for ten groats,
To serve you one whole year:
So, good dame Gillian, grant me leave
Within your house to stay;
For, by St. Anne, do what you can,
I will not yet away.

Her churlish usage pleas'd him still,
And put him to such proof,
That he at night was almost choak'd
Within that smoaky roof:
But as he sat with smiling cheer,
The event of all to see,
His dame brought forth a piece of dough,
Which in the fire throws she;

Where lying on the hearth to bake,
By chance the cake did burn :
What can'st thou not, thou lout (quoth she),
Take pains the same to turn ?
Thou art more quick to take it out,
And eat it up half dough,
Than thus to stay till 't be enough,
And so thy manners show.

But serve me such another trick,
I'll thwack thee on the snout :
Which made the patient king, good man
Of her to stand in doubt.
But, to be brief, to bed they went,
The old man and his wife ;
But never such a lodging had
King Alfred in his life ;

For he was laid in white sheep's wool,
New pull'd from tanned fells ;
And o'er his head hang'd spiders webs,
As if they had been bells.
Is this the country guise ? thought he ;
Then here I will not stay,
But hence be gone, as soon as breaks
The peeping of next day.

The cackling hens and geese kept roost,
And perched at his side;
Where at the last, the watchful cock
Made known the morning tide:
Then up got Alfred, with his horn,
And blew so long a blast,
That it made Gillian and her groom,
In bed, full sore aghast.

Arise, quoth she, we are undone;
This night we lodged have,
At unawares, within our house,
A false dissembling knave:
Rise, husband, rise; he'll cut our throats;
He calleth for his mates:
I'd give old Will, our good cade lamb,
He would depart our gates.

But still king Alfred blew his horn
Before them more and more;
Till that an hundred lords and knights
All lighted at the door:
Who cried, All hail, all hail, good king!
Long have we sought your grace.
And here you find (my merry men all)
Your sov'reign in this place.

We surely must be hang'd up both,
Old Gillian, I much fear,
The shepherd said, for using thus
Our good king Alfred here.
O pardon, my liege, quoth Gillian then,
For my husband, and for me:
By these ten bones, I never thought
The same that now I see.

And by my hook, the shepherd said,
(An oath both good and true)
Before this time, O noble king,
I ne'er your highness knew:
Then pardon me and my old wife,
That we may after say,
When first you came into our house
It was a happy day.

It shall be done, said Alfred, straight;
And Gillian, thy old dame,
For this her churlish using me
Deserveth not much blame:
For 'tis thy country guise, I see,
To be thus bluntish still;
And where the plainest meaning is,
Remains the smallest ill.

And, master, lo, I tell thee now,
For thy late manhood shown,
A thousand wethers I'll bestow
Upon thee for thy own;
And pasture-ground, as much as will
Suffice to feed them all:
And this thy cottage I will change
Into a stately hall.

And for the same, as duty binds,
The shepherd said, Good king,
A milk-white lamb, once ev'ry year,
I'll to your highness bring:
And Gillian, my wife, likewise,
Of wool to make you coats,
Will give you as much at new-year's tide,
As shall be worth ten groats:

And in your praise, my bag-pipes shall
Sound sweetly once a year,
How Alfred, our renowned king,
Most kindly hath been here.
Thanks, shepherd, thanks, quoth he again:
The next time I come hither,
My lords with me, here in this house,
Will all be merry together.

IV.

A SONG OF KING EDGAR,

Shewing how he was deceived of his love.

The story upon which this ballad is founded may be seen in any of the general histories of England. It has been the subject of three dramatic pieces; two by Aaron Hill, and one by Mason.

When as king Edgar did govern this land,
Adown, adown, down, down, down;
And in the strength of his years he did stand,
Call him down a;
Such praise was spread of a gallant dame,
Which did through England carry great fame
And she a lady of high degree,
The earl of Devonshire's daughter was she.
The king, who lately had buried the queen,
And not a long time a widower been,
Hearing this praise of a gallant maid,
Upon her beauty his love he laid;
And in his mind he would often say,
I will send for that lady gay;

Yea, I will send for this lady bright,
Which is my treasure and delight:
Whose beauty, like to Phœbus' beams,
Doth glitter through all christian realms.
Then to himself he would reply,
Saying, How fond a prince am I,
To cast my love so base and low,
Upon a girl I do not know!
King Edgar will his fancy frame
To have some peerless princely dame,
The daughter of a royal king,
That may a dainty dowry bring;
Whose matchless beauty brought in place,
May Estrild's colour clean disgrace.
But, senseless man, what do I mean,
Upon a broken reed to lean?
Or what fond fury did me move,
Thus to abuse my dearest love?
Whose visage grac'd with heav'nly hue,
Doth Helen's honour quite subdue,
The glory of her beauteous pride,
Sweet Estrild's favour doth deride:
Then pardon my unseemly speech,
Dear love and lady, I beseech:
For I my thoughts will henceforth frame,
To spread the honour of thy name.
Then unto him he call'd a knight,
Which was most trusty in his sight;

And unto him thus he did say,
To earl Orgator go thy way:
Where ask for Estrild, comely dame,
Whose beauty went so far for fame:
And if you find her comely grace,
As fame did spread in every place,
Then tell her father, she shall be
My crowned queen, if she agree.
The knight in message did proceed,
And into Devonshire with speed:
But when he saw the lady bright,
He was so ravish'd at her sight,
That nothing could his passion move,
Except he might obtain her love:
For, day and night while there he staid,
He courted still this peerless maid,
And in his suit he shew'd such skill,
That at the length he gain'd her good-will;
Forgetting quite the duty tho,
Which he unto the king did owe.
Then coming home unto his grace,
He told him with dissembling face,
That these reporters were to blame,
That so advanc'd the maiden's name;
For I assure your grace, said he,
She is as other women be;
Her beauty of such great report,
No better than the common sort,

And for unmeet in every thing
To match with such a noble king;
But tho' her face be nothing fair,
Yet sith she is her father's heir,
Perhaps some lord of high degree
Would very fain her husband be;
Then if your grace would give consent,
I would myself be well content
The damsel for my wife to take,
For her great lands and livings sake.
The king (whom thus he did deceive)
Incontinent did give him leave;
For on that point he did not stand,
For why, he had not need of land.
Then being glad, he went away,
And wedded straight this lady gay;
The fairest creature bearing life,
Had this false knight unto his wife;
And by that match of high degree,
An Earl soon after that was he.
E're he long time had married been,
That many had her beauty seen;
Her praise was spread both far and near;
The king again thereof did hear;
Who then in heart did plainly prove,
He was betrayed of his love:
Though therefore he was vexed sore,
Yet seem'd he not to grieve therefore;

But kept his count'nance good and kind,
As tho' he bore no grudge in mind.
But on a day it came to pass,
When as the king full merry was,
To Ethelwold in sport he said,
I muse what cheer there should be made,
If to thy house I should resort
A night or two for princely sport?
Hereat the Earl shew'd count'nance glad,
Though in his heart he was full sad:
Saying, your grace shall welcome be,
If so your grace will honour me.
Then as the day appointed was,
Before the king did thither pass,
The Earl before-hand did prepare
The king his coming to declare;
And with a count'nance passing grim,
He call'd his lady unto him,
Saying, with sad and heavy cheer,
I pray you, when the king comes here,
Sweet lady, as you tender me,
Let your attire but homely be;
And wash not thou thy angel's face,
But so thy beauty clean disgrace;
Thereto thy gesture so apply,
It may seem loathsome to the eye:
For if the king should there behold
Thy glorious beauty so extoll'd,

Then shall my life soon shorten'd be,
For my deserts and treachery,
When to thy father first I came,
Tho' I did not declare the same,
Yet was I put in trust to bring
The joyful tidings to the king;
Who for thy glorious beauty seen,
Did think of thee to make his queen:
But when I had thy person found,
Thy beauty gave me such a wound,
No rest nor comfort could I take,
Till you, sweet love, my grief did slake;
And that tho' duty charged me
Most faithful to my lord to be;
Yet love, upon the other side,
Bid for myself I should provide:
Then for my suit and service shown,
At length I won you for my own;
And for my love in wedlock spent,
Your choice you need no whit repent:
Then since my grief I have express'd,
Sweet lady, grant me my request.
Good words she gave with smiling cheer,
Musing of that which she did hear;
And casting many things in mind,
Great fault therewith she seem'd to find;
But in herself she thought it shame,
To make that foul which God did frame.

Most costly robes full rich therefore,
In bravest sort that day she wore,
Doing all that e'er she might
To set her beauty forth to sight:
And her best skill in every thing
She shew'd, to entertain the king.
Wherefore the king so 'snared was,
That reason quite from him did pass;
His heart by her was set on fire,
He had to her a great desire:
And for the looks he gave her then,
For every look she gave him ten.
Wherefore the king perceived plain,
His love and looks were not in vain.
Upon a time it chanced so,
The king he would a hunting go;
And as they through a wood did ride,
The earl on horseback by his side;
For so the story telleth plain,
That with a shaft the earl was slain:
So that when he had lost his life,
He took the lady unto wife;
Who married her, all harm to shun,
By whom he did beget a son.
Thus he that did the king deceive,
Did by desert his death receive.
Then, to conclude and make an end,
Be true and faithful to thy friend.

V.

How Coventry was made free by Godina, Countess of Chester.

Leofricus, that noble Earl
Of Chester, as I read,
Did for the city of Coventry
Many a noble deed:

Great privileges for the town
This noble man did get;
And of all things did make it so,
That they toll-free did sit:

Save only that for horses still
They did some custom pay,
Which was great charges to the town,
Full long and many a day:

Wherefore his wife, Godina fair,
Did of the Earl request,
That thereof he would make it free,
As well as all the rest.

So when that she long time had sued,
Her purpose to obtain;
Her noble lord at length she took,
When in a pleasant vein:

And unto him with smiling cheer,
She did forthwith proceed,
Intreating greatly that he would
Perform that goodly deed.

You move me much, my fair, quoth he,
Your suit I fain would shun;
But what will you perform and do,
To have this matter done?

Why any thing, my lord, (quoth she)
You will with reason crave;
I will perform it with good will,
If I my wish might have.

If thou wilt grant the thing, he said,
That I shall now require,
As soon as it is finished,
Thou shalt have thy desire.

Command what you think good, my lord,
I will thereto agree,
On this condition, that the town
For ever may be free.

If thou wilt but thy cloaths strip off,
And by me lay them down,
And at noon-day on horseback ride
Stark-naked through the town;

They shall be free for evermore:
If thou wilt not do so,
More liberty than now they have,
I never will bestow.

The lady, at this strange demand,
Was much abash'd in mind;
And yet for to fulfill this thing,
She never a whit repin'd.

Wherefore unto all officers
Of Coventry she sent,
That they perceiving her good will,
Which for the weal was bent;

That on the day that she should ride,
All persons through the town
Should keep their houses shut, and doors,
And clap their windows down:

So that no creature, young or old,
Should in the streets be seen,
Till she had ridden all about,
Throughout the city clean.

And when the day of riding came,
No person did her see,
Saving her lord; after which time
The town was ever free.

VI.

The valiant Courage and Policy of the Kentishmen, which overcame William the Conqueror, who sought to take from them their ancient laws and customs, which they retain to this day.

The following account of the event which gave rise to this Ballad, is extracted from the Lives of the three Norman Kings of England, by Sir John Heyward, 4to. 1613. p. 97.

"Further, by the counsaile of Stigand, Archb. of Canter-
"bury, and of Eglesine, Abbot of St. Augustines (who at
"that time were the chiefe governours of Kent) as the king
"was riding towards Dover, at Swanescombe, two mile
"from Gravesend, the Kentishmen came towards him
"armed, and bearing boughs in their hands, as if it had
"bene a mooving wood; they enclosed him upon the sud-
"den, and with a firme countenance, but words well tem-
"pered with modestie and respect, they demanded of him
"the use of their ancient liberties and lawes: that in other
"matters they would yield obedience unto him: that with-
"out this they desired not to live. The king was content
"to strike saile to the storme, and to give them a vaine

" satisfaction for the present; knowing right well, that the
" generall customes and lawes of the residue of the realme,
" would in short time overflow these particular places. So
" pledges being given on both sides, they conducted him to
" Rochester, and yielded the countie of Kent, and the castle
" of Dover into his power."

This Ballad is printed from an old black letter volume, called —The Garland of Delight.

WHEN as the duke of Normandy,
With glistering spear and shield,
Had entered into fair England,
And foil'd his foes in field;

On Christmas-day in solemn sort
Then was he crowned here,
By Albert archbishop of York,
With many a noble peer.

Which being done, he changed quite
The customs of this land,
And punisht such as daily sought
His statutes to withstand:

And many cities he subdued,
Fair London with the rest;
But Kent did still withstand his force,
And did his laws detest.

To Dover then he took his way,
The castle down to fling,
Which Arviragus builded there,
The noble British king.

Which when the brave archbishop bold
Of Canterbury knew,
The abbot of Saint Augustines eke,
With all their gallant crew,

They set themselves in armour bright,
These mischiefs to prevent
With all the yeomen brave and bold
That were in fruitful Kent.

At Canterbury did they meet
Upon a certain day,
With sword and spear, with bill and bow,
And stopt the conqueror's way.

Let us not yield like bond-men poor
To Frenchmen in their pride,
But keep our ancient liberty,
What chance so e'er betide,

And rather die in bloody field,
With manly courage prest,
Than to endure the servile yoke,
Which we so much detest.

Thus did the Kentish commons cry
Unto their leaders still,
And so march'd forth in warlike sort,
And stand at Swanscomb-hill:

There in the woods they hid themselves,
Under the shadow green,
Thereby to get them vantage good,
Of all their foes unseen.

And for the conqueror's coming there,
They privily laid wait,
And thereby suddenly appal'd
His lofty high conceit;

For when they spied his approach,
In place as they did stand,
Then marched they to him with speed,
Each one a bough in hand,

So that unto the conqueror's sight,
Amazed as he stood,
They seem'd to be a walking grove,
Or else a moving wood.

The shape of men he could not see,
The boughs did hide them so:
And now his heart with fear did quake,
To see a forest go;

Before, behind, and on each side,
As he did cast his eye,
He spied the wood with sober pace
Approach to him full nigh:

But when the Kentish men had thus
Enclos'd the conqueror round,
Most suddenly they drew their swords,
And threw their boughs to ground;

Their banners they display in sight,
Their trumpets sound a charge,
Their ratling drums strike up alarms,
Their troops stretch out at large.

The conqueror with all his train,
Was hereat sore aghast,
And most in peril, when they thought
All peril had been past.

Unto the Kentish men he sent,
The cause to understand,
For what intent, and for what cause
They took this war in hand;

To whom they made this short reply,
For liberty we fight,
And to enjoy king Edward's laws,
The which we hold our right.

Then said the dreadful conqueror,
You shall have what you will,
Your ancient customs and your laws,
So that you will be still,

And each thing else that you will crave
With reason at my hand,
So you will but acknowledge me
Chief king of fair England.

The Kentish men agreed thereon,
And laid their arms aside,
And by this means king Edward's laws
In Kent doth still abide;

And in no place in England else
These customs do remain,
Which they by manly policy
Did of duke William gain.

VII.

THE BRAVE MEN OF KENT.

This Ballad is of a later date, but being upon the same subject, we have introduced it here. It is the production of Tom Durfey, and was written the beginning of this century

When Harold was invaded,
And falling lost his crown;
And Norman William waded
Thro' gore to pull him down;
When countries round with fear profound,
To mend their sad condition,
And lands to save, base homage gave;
Bold Kent made no submission.
Cho. Sing, sing in praise of men of Kent,
So loyal, brave and free;
'Mongst Britons' race, if one surpass,
A man of Kent is he.

The hardy stout free-holders,
That knew the tyrant near,
In girdles, and on shoulders,
A grove of oaks did bear:
Whom when he saw in battle draw,
And thought how he might need 'em;
He turn'd his arms, allow'd their terms,
Compleat with noble freedom:

And when by barons wrangling,
Hot faction did increase,
And vile intestine jangling
Had banish'd England's peace,
The men of Kent to battle went,
They fear'd no wild confusion;
But join'd with York, soon did the work,
And made a blest conclusion:

At hunting, or the race too,
They sprightly vigour shew;
And at a female chase too,
None like a Kentish beau;
All blest with health; and as for wealth,
By fortune's kind embraces,
A yeoman gray shall oft out-weigh
A knight in other places:

The generous, brave and hearty,
All o'er the shire we find;
And for the low-church party,
They're of the brightest kind:
For king and laws, they prop the cause,
Which high-church has confounded;
They love with height the moderate right,
But hate the crop-ear'd round-head:

The promis'd land of blessing,
For our forefathers meant,
Is now in right possessing,
For Canaan sure was Kent:
The dome at Knoll, by fame enroll'd,
The church at Canterbury,
The hops, the beer, the cherries here,
May fill a famous story.

General Wolfe being a native of Kent, on his death the following stanza was added to this Ballad.

Augmented still in story
Their ancient fame shall rise,
And Wolfe with matchless glory,
High soaring reach the skies:

Quebec shall own his great renown,
And France, with awful wonder,
His deeds can tell, how great he fell,
Amidst his godlike thunder.

VIII.

MEMORABLES OF THE MONTGOMERIES.

Reprinted from a pamphlet published in 4to. at Glasgow, 1770, by Robert and Andrew Foulis, and there said to be printed from the only copy known to remain, which had been preserved above sixty years by the care of Hugh Montgomerie, senior, at Eaglesham, long one of the factors of the family of Eglintoun.

A NOBLE Roman was the root
From which Montgomeries came,
Who brought his legion from the war,
And settled the same

Upon a hill 'twixt Rome and Spain,
Gomericus * by name;
From which he and his off-spring do
Their sir-name still retain.

* Mons Gomericus.

From this unto the wars of France
Their valour did them bring,
That they great instruments might be
To save the Gallic king:

Here, with great splendor and renown,
Six centuries they spend:
At length for England they set sail;
Ambition hath no end.

On British ground they land at length:
Rodger must general be,
A cousin of the conqueror's,
And fittest to supplie

The greatest post; into the field
The army then leads he,
Into a camp, Hastings by name,
In Sussex, where you'll see

The marks of camps unto this day;
And where you'll hear it told,
The English king did them attack
Most like a captain bold.

But soon, alas! he found it vain,
With Rodger arms to try:
This warry officer prepares,
His projects to defy.

The strong attacks he then observes,
Which made him thence to dread,
That England's king might be among
Those who charged with such speed.

The life-guards straight he ordered,
Their fury to defend;
Where Harold, England's king, at once
His crown and life did end.

Whence to the conqueror did come
The English sceptre great,
And William, England's king declar'd,
To London came in state.

Earl Rodger * then the greatest man,
Next to the king was thought;
And nothing that he could desire,
But it to him was brought.

Montgomery town, Montgomery shire
And earl of Shresburie,
And Arundale do shew this man
Of grandeur full to be.

Thus did he live all this king's reign:
For works of piety,
He built an abbacie, and then
Prepar'd himself to die.

* Dugdale's Baronage, and Histories of England.

At last king William yields to fate;
And then his second son
Mounts on the throne, which had almost
The kingdom quite undone:

Some for the eldest son stand up,
As Rodger's sons did all:
But the usurper keeps the throne,
Which did begin their fall.

Then Philip into Scotland came,
Unable to endure,
That they who earldoms had possest,
Of nought should be secure.

The king of Scots well knew the worth
Of men of noble race,
Who, in no times of ages past,
Their worth did once deface.

He in the Merse gives Philip lands,
Which afterwards he soon
With the black Douglass did exchange
For Eastwood and Ponoon,

Where many ages they did live,
By king and country lov'd;
As men of valour and renown,
Who were with honour mov'd

To shun no hazard, when they could
To either service do:
Thus did they live, thus did they spend
Their blood and money too.

At last earl Douglass did inform,
That, to our king's disgrace,
An English earl had deeply swore,
He'd hunt in Chevychase,

And, maugre all that Scots could do,
Would kill and bear away
The choicest deer of Otterburn,*
And best of harts would slay.

Our king sent his commands unto
Sir Hugh Montgomerie,
And told him Douglass wanted men
Who fight could, but not flee.

The stout Sir Hugh † himself prepares,
The Douglass to support;
And with him took his eldest son:
Then did they all resort

Unto the field, with their brave men,
Where most of them did die;
Of fifteen hundred warlike Scots
Came home but fifty-three.

* See Percy's Reliques, Vol. I. p. 18, ed. 1794.
† Histories of Scotland.

Douglas was slain ; sir Hugh again
The battle did renew ;
He made no stand, with his own hand
The earl Percy he slew.

Sir Hugh was slain, sir John maintain'd
The honour of the day ;
And with him brought the victory,
And Percy's son away.

He with his ransom built Ponoon,
A castle which yet stands ;
The king well pleas'd as a reward
Did therefore give him lands ;

And some time after gave his niece,
Of Eglintoun the heir,
To sir Hugh's representative ;
Thus joined was this pair.

As with her came a great estate ;
So by her did descend
Her royal blood to Lennox * house,
Which did in Darnly end,

Who father was to James the sixth,
Of Britain the first king,
Whose royal race unto this day
Doth o'er great Britain reign.

* Earl of Lennox.

Since you are come of royal blood,
And kings are sprung from you.
See that with greatest zeal and love
Those virtues ye pursue,

Which to those honours rais'd your house,
And shall without all stain,
In heralds books your ensigns flowr'd,
And counter-flowr'd maintain.

IX.

How King Henry the First had his Children drowned in the Sea, as they came out of France.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

After our royal king
Had foil'd his foes in France,
And spent the pleasant spring
His honour to advance;

Into fair England he return'd
With fame and victory;
That time the subjects of this land
Receiv'd him joyfully.

But at his home return
His children left he still
In France, for to sojourn
To purchase learned skill:

Duke William, with his brother dear,
Lord Richard was his name,
Which was the Earl of Chester then,
And thirsted after fame;

The king's fair daughter eke,
The lady Mary bright,
With divers noble peers,
And many a hardy knight:

All these were left together there
In pleasures and delight,
When that our king to England came,
After the bloody fight.

But when fair Flora had
Drawn forth her treasure dry,
That winter cold and sad
With hoary head drew nigh;

Those princes all, with one consent,
Prepared all things meet,
To pass the seas for fair England,
Whose sight to them was sweet.

To England let us hie,
Thus every one did say,
For Christmas draweth nigh;
No longer let us stay,

But spend the Christmas-time
Within our father's court,
Where lady Pleasure doth attend,
With many a princely sport.

To sea those princes went,
Fulfill'd with mirth and joy:
But this their merriment
Did turn to dear annoy.

The sailors and the shipmen all,
Through foul excess of wine,
Were so disguis'd, that on the sea
They show'd themselves like swine;

The stern no man could guide,
The master sleeping lay,
The sailors all beside
Went reeling every way,

So that the ship at random rode
Upon the foaming flood,
Whereby in peril of their lives
The princes always stood:

Which made distilling tears
From their fair eyes to fall;
Their hearts were fill'd with fears,
No help they had at all:

They wisht themselves upon the land
A thousand times and more,
And at the last they came in sight
Of England's pleasant shore.

Then every one began
To turn their sighs to smiles;
Their colour pale and wan,
A cheerful look exiles:

The princely lords most lovingly
Their ladies did embrace;
For now in England shall we be
(Quoth they) in little space.

Take comfort then (they said)
Behold the land at last;
Then be no more dismay'd,
The worst is gone and past.

But while they did this joyful hope
With comfort entertain,
The goodly ship upon a rock
In sunder burst in twain.

With that a grievous shriek
Among them there was made,
And every one did seek
On something to be staid:

But all in vain such help they sought;
The ship so soon did sink,
That in the sea they were constrain'd
To take their latest drink.

There might you see the lords
And ladies for to lie
Amidst the salt sea foam,
With many a grievous cry;

Still labouring for life's defence
With stretched arms abroad,
And lifting up their lilly hands,
For help with one accord.

But as good fortune would,
The sweet young duke did get
Into the cock-boat then,
Where safely he did sit:

But when he heard his sister cry,
The king's fair daughter dear,
He turn'd his boat to take her in,
Whose death did draw so near:

But while he strove to take
His sweet young sister in,
The rest such shift did make
In sea as they did swim,

That to the boat a number got,
So many, as at the last
The boat, and all that were therein,
Were drown'd and over-cast:

Of lords and gentlemen,
And ladies fair of face,
Not one escaped then,
Which was a heavy case:

Threescore and ten were drown'd in all,
And none escaped death,
But one poor butcher, which had swom
Himself quite out of breath.

This was most heavy news
Unto our comely king,
Who did all mirth refuse,
This word when they did bring:

For by this means no child he had
His kingdom to succeed,
Whereby his sister's son was king,
As you shall plainly read.

X.

A Song of the strange lives of two young Princes of England who became Shepherds on Salisbury-plain, and were afterwards restored to their former estates.

This Ballad is a paraphrase of the beautiful Episode of Argentile and Curan, in Warner's Albion's England.

In kingly Stephen's reign,
Two royal dukes there was,
That all our English lords,
For greatness far did pass.
The one of Devonshire nam'd,
That had a daughter fair,
Which he appointed at his death
To be his only heir

And her in love commits
Unto the Cornwall duke,
Whom he with tenderness and care
Most kindly undertook:
The promise being made,
The duke of Devonshire dies,
And all that Cornwall vow'd to do,
He afterwards denies.

Yet well he educates the maid,
That Maudlin she was grown
The fairest lady under heaven,
For beauty being known:
And many princes sought for love,
But none might her obtain,
For covetous Cornwall to himself
The dukedom sought to gain.

Upon a time prince Raymund chanc'd
This comely dame to see,
With whom he fell so deep in love,
As any prince might be:
Unhappy youth, what should he do?
She still was kept in mew,
Nor he, nor any of his friends,
Admitted to her view.

One while he melancholy pines
Himself with grief away;
Anon he thinks by force of arms
To win her if he may:
Until at length commanding love
Became to be his judge,
And chang'd him soon from lordly state,
Into a kitchen drudge.

And so access he had, good prince,
His purpose to bewray:
But still fair Maudlin's answer was,
She husbandless would stay:
Meanwhile her guardian beat his brains,
Her dukedom to atchieve,
Not caring what become of her,
So he by her might thrive.

And so resolving that she should
Unto some peasant wed,
And Raymund, then suppos'd a drudge,
Should stand him in that stead:
But Maudlin, marking his intent,
Unkindly takes that he
Should bar the noble match from her,
Thus for a base degree.

The lady shifting out of doors,
Departed then by stealth,
Than thus with baseness for to match,
That might have liv'd in wealth.
When Raymund heard of her escape,
With sad and grieved heart,
He left the palace of the duke,
And after did depart.

Forgetful of himself and birth,
His country, friends, and all,
And minding only her to seek,
That thus had prov'd his thrall:
Nor meant he after to frequent
The court, or stately towns,
But liv'd with pinching cares and grief,
Amongst the country grounds.

A brace of years upon that plain,
Near Salisbury that lies,
In great content with feeding flocks,
A shepherd's life he tries,
In hopes his love thereby to waste;
But then began again
Within his heart a second love,
The worser of the twain.

A country wench, a neat-herd's maid,
Where Raymund kept his sheep,
Did feed her drove, with whom this prince
In love was wounded deep:
Where sitting on the downy plain,
And having small to do,
These shepherds there, in friendly sort,
Thus plainly 'gan to woo.

I know, fair maid, quoth Raymund then,
And thou as well as I,
No maid there is that willingly
With maidenhead would die:
The ploughman's labour hath no end,
And he will churlish prove,
The tradesman hath more work in hand
Than doth belong to love.

The merchant venturing abroad,
Suspects his wife at home:
A youth will still the wanton play,
An old man proves a mome.
Then choose a shepherd, bonny girl,
Whose life is merriest still,
For merrily he spends his days,
Thus on the fair green hill;

And then at night, when day is done,
Goes home from thence betime,
And in the fire turns a crab,
And sings some merry rhyme;
Nor lacks he tales, while round about
The nut-brown bowl doth trot,
And sitting singing cares away,
Till he to bed be got.

There sleeps he soundly all the night,
Forgetting morrow's cares,
Nor fears the blasting of his corn,
Nor uttering of his wares:
And this I know full well, fair lass,
More quiet nights and days
The shepherd sleeps and wakes, than he
Whose cattle he doth graze.

A king I see is but a man;
And so, sweet lass, am I:
Content is worth a monarchy,
And mischiefs shoot full high;
As late it did unto a duke,
Not dwelling far from hence,
Who had a daughter, save thyself,
On earth the fairest wench.

With that, good soul, she stay'd and sigh'd:
Speak on, quoth she, and tell
How fair she was, and who she was,
That thus did bear the bell.
She was, quoth he, of stately grace,
Of countenance most fair:
No maid alive, for beauty's prize,
May well with her compare.

A glove-like head, a golden hair,
A forehead smooth and high,
A seemly nose, on either side
Did shine a greyish eye:
Two rosy cheeks, and ruddy lips,
White ivory teeth within,
A mouth in mean, and underneath
A round and dimpled chin:

A snow-white neck with bluish veins,
To make her seem more fair,
Yea, all her body fram'd so fine,
That earth had none more rare:
For life, for love, for form, for face,
None fairer was than she;
And none but only she alone
So fair a maid could be.

I knew the lady well (quoth she:)
But worthless of such praise:
But credit me, no shepherd thou,
Thy speeches thee bewray:
With that he wept, and she was wot,
And both did silence keep,
And equally perplex'd in love,
They set them down to weep.

In sooth (quoth he) I am not such
As seeming I profess,
To be a prince's son by birth,
My liking shews no less:
In Scotland is my father's court,
And Raymund is my name:
With Cornwall's duke I liv'd in pomp,
Till love controll'd the same,

And did this lady dearly love,
Although she lov'd not me:
But now that love is wasted quite,
And now I die for thee.
I grant (quoth she) you lov'd her well,
If that your love were such;
Yet think of me your second love,
In love to be as much.

Your twice beloved Maudlin here
Submits herself to thee,
And what she could not at the first,
The second time shall be,
In fortune, not in person chang'd;
For I am still the same,
In heart and mind as chaste and true
As first to me you came.

Thus sweetly surfeiting in joy,
They tenderly embrace,
And for their wished wedding day
Found fitting time and place:
And so these lovely princes both
Each other did befriend,
Where, after many a hard mishap,
Their loves had joyful end.

XI.

King Henry the Second crowning his son Henry in his life-time, shortly after the young king makes war against his father: And being visited with sickness, and troubled in conscience, begs forgiveness. His father sending his ring in token thereof, the young king deploring his wretched life, caused himself to be drawn with a halter from the bed where he lay, and laid on a bed bestrewed with ashes, and so died penitently.

Historians all agree, that no prince who ever sat on the English throne deserved better of his subjects and his children, than Henry the Second; and yet, that no monarch ever received more ungrateful returns than he did from the latter. The subject of this Ballad relates to the death of his eldest son; an account of which we shall give the reader, extracted from Speed's History, p. 478. "Thus was his life cut off like a weaver's thread (say "authors,*) who had by dying cut off the hope of many: "But whatsoever his life was, which God thus shortned "at his age of twentie and eight yeeres, certainly his "death was not inglorious, but worthy to be set out in "tables at large, as a pattern to disobedient children: "for his father refusing to visit him (fearing his own

* Rog. Wend. MSS. Matt. Paris, Thom. Walsing. Ypod. Neustr.

" life) but sending his ring in signe of forgiveness, the
" dying prince most humbly with flouds of teares kissing
" the same, made a most sorrowfull confession of his
" sinnes, and feeling death approach, would needs be
" drawne (as an unworthy sinner) out of his own bed, and
" laid upon another, strewed with ashes, where his soule
" departed in a most penitent manner from his body;
" which being related to the father, hee fell upon the
" earth, weeping bitterly, and like another David for his
" Absolon, mourned very much."

[This also is reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

You parents whose affections fond
Upon your children doth appear,
Mark well the story now in hand,
Wherein you shall great matters hear;
And learn by this which shall be told,
To hold your children still in awe,
Lest otherwise they prove too bold,
And set not by your state a straw.

King Henry, second of that name,
For very love that he did bear
Unto his son, whose courteous fame
Did through the land his credit rear,
Did call the prince upon a day
Unto the court in royal sort,
Attired in most rich array,
And there he made him princely sport;

And afterwards he took in hand,
For fear he should deceived be,
To crown him king of fair England,
While life possest his majesty,
What time the king in humble sort,
Like to a subject waited then
Upon his son, and by report
Swore unto him his noble men.

And by this means in England now
Two kings at once together live:
But lordly rule will not allow
In partnership their days to drive:
The son therefore ambitiously
Doth seek to pull his father down,
By bloody war and subtlety,
To take from him his princely crown.

Sith I am king (thus did he say)
Why should I not both rule and reign?
My heart disdains for to obey;
Yea all or nothing will I gain.
Hereon he raised armies great,
And draws a number to his part,
His father's force downright to beat,
And with his spear to pierce his heart.

In seven set battles did he fight
Against his loving father dear,
To overthrow him in despight,
To win himself a kingdom clear.
But nought at all could he prevail,
His armies always had the worst:
Such grief did then his heart assail,
He thought himself of God accurst.

And therefore falling wondrous sick,
He humbly to his father sent;
The worm of conscience did him prick,
And his vile deeds he did lament:
Requiring that his noble grace
Would now forget all that was past,
And come to him in heavy case,
Being at point to breathe his last.

When this word came unto our king,
The news did make him wondrous woe;
And unto him he sent his ring,
Where he in person would not go.
Commend me to my son, he said,
So sick in bed as he doth lie,
And tell him I am well apaid
To hear he doth for mercy cry:

The lord forgive his foul offence,
And I forgive them all (quoth he),
His evil with good I'll recompence,
Bear him this message now from me.
When that the prince did see the ring,
He kissed it in joyful wise;
And for his faults his hands did wring,
While bitter tears gusht from his eyes:

Then to his lords that stood him nigh,
With feeble voice then did he call;
Desiring them immediately
To strip him from his garments all.
Take off from me these robes so rich,
And lay me in a cloath of hair:
Quoth he, my grievous sins are such,
Hell fire's flame I greatly fear.

A hempen haltar then he took,
About his neck he put the same,
And with a grievous piteous look
His speech unto them he did frame:
You reverend bishops more and less,
Pray for my soul to God on high;
For like a thief, I do confess,
I have deserved for to die:

And therefore by this halter here,
I yield myself unto you all,
A wretch unworthy to appear
Before my God celestial.
Therefore, within that hempen bed,
All strew'd with ashes as it is,
Let me be laid when I am dead,
And draw me thereunto by this:

Yea, by this halter strong and tough,
Drag forth my carcase to the same;
Yet is that couch not bad enough
For my vile body wrapt in shame.
And when you see me lie along,
Bepowdered in ashes there;
Say, there is he that did such wrong
Unto his father every where.

And with that word he breath'd his last;
Wherefore, according to his mind,
They drew him up by the neck full fast
Unto the place by him assign'd:
And afterward in solemn sort
At Roan in France buried was he,
Where many princes did resort
To his most royal obsequy.

XII.

THE UNFORTUNATE CONCUBINE;

OR,

Rosamond's Overthrow;

Occasion'd by her brother's unadvisedly praising her beauty to two young Knights of Salisbury, as they rid on the road.

In Dr. Percy's Reliques of Antient Poetry, Vol. II. another Ballad on the story of this lady is to be found. Prefixed to it the Doctor hath given a very full account of her history, and entered into a minute enquiry concerning the circumstances of her life, and the mistakes of several of our historians about it. To this account, as the fullest and most accurate on the subject, we refer the reader.

SWEET, youthful, charming ladies fair,
Fram'd of the purest mould,
With rosy cheeks, and silken hair,
Which shine like threads of gold:
Soft tears of pity here bestow
On the unhappy fate
Of Rosamond, who long ago
Prov'd most unfortunate.

When as the second Henry reign'd
On the imperial throne,
How he this beauteous flower gain'd,
To you I shall make known:
With all the circumstances too
Which did her life attend;
How first she into favour grew,
And of her fatal end.

As three young knights of Salisbury
Were riding on the way,
One boasted of a fair lady,
Within her bower so gay:
I have a sister, Clifford swears,
But few men do her know;
Upon her face the skin appears
Like drops of blood on snow.

My sister's locks of curled hair
Outshine the golden ore;
Her skin for whiteness may compare
With the fine lilly flow'r:
Her breasts are lovely to behold,
Like to the driven snow:
I would not, for her weight in gold,
King Henry should her know.

King Henry had a bower near
Where they were riding by,
And he did Clifford over-hear:
Thought he immediately,
Tho' I her brother shou'd offend
For that fair white and red;
For her I am resolv'd to send,
To grace my royal bed.

The king, who was of high renown,
Wou'd not his fancy pall;
For having writ his pleasure down,
He did young Clifford call:
Come here to me now out of hand,
Come hither unto me;
I am the king of fair England;
My messenger thou'lt be.

I to your sister here have writ
Three letters seal'd with gold;
No messenger I think so fit
As you: therefore, behold,
Convey them to her hand with speed;
Make not the least delay:
My will and pleasure let her read,
And my commands obey.

Young Clifford then the letters took
From Henry's royal hand,
Tho' with a melancholy look,
And mounted out of hand:
Soft tears bedimm'd his noble sight,
His grieved heart was sad;
Altho' he was as brave a knight
As any Henry had.

With that this noble knight of fame
Rid on without delay,
Until he to the bower came,
Which was both rich and gay:
She cried, when he knock'd at the ring,
Who raps so fierce and bold?
Sister, I've brought you from the king
Three letters seal'd with gold.

Then with her fingers, long and small,
She broke the seals of gold;
And as she did to reading fall
At first, you might behold
The smiles of pleasant sweet delight,
As if well satisfied;
But ere she had concluded quite,
She rung her hands, and cried:

Why did you boast beyond your bounds,
When Oxford you did see?
You might have talk'd of hawks and hounds,
And never bragg'd of me.
When by the king I am defil'd,
My father's griefs begin;
He'll have no comfort of his child,
Nor come to my wedding.

Go fetch me down my planet-book
Straight from my private room;
For in the same I mean to look,
What is decreed my doom.
The planet-book to her they brought,
And laid it on her knee;
She found that all would come to nought,
For poison'd she should be.

I curse you, brother, then she cried,
Who caus'd my destiny;
I might have been some lord's fair bride,
But you have ruin'd me.
With that, she call'd her waiting-maid,
To bring her riding-weed;
And to her groom she likewise said,
Saddle my milk-white steed.

Some ride before her, to report
Her coming to the king;
As she approach'd the royal court,
Sweet peals of bells did ring.
A garland o'er her head they bore,
To magnify her charms;
And as she came the king before,
He clasp'd her in his arms.

With blushes then she did beseech
The king on her bare knee;
Her words were these, I pray, my liege,
What is your will with me?
Said he, I sent for thee, my Rose,
To grace my royal bed:
Now, as he did his mind disclose,
She blushed scarlet-red.

Blush not, my fairest Rosamond;
Fear no disastrous fate;
For by my kingly pow'r I can
Place thee in happy state:
No lady in this court of mine
Can purchase thy desert;
Whose pleasant looks, and charms divine,
Have won my royal heart.

The gifts and presents of a king
Soon caus'd her to comply;
Thinking there was not any thing
Like royal dignity.
But as her bright and golden scene
In court began to shine,
The news was carried to the queen
Of this new concubine;

At which she was enraged so
With malice in her breast,
That till she wrought her overthrow,
She could not be at rest.
She felt the fury of the queen,
Ere she had flourish'd long;
And died, just as she had foreseen,
By force of poison strong.

The angry queen, with malice fraught,
Could not herself contain,
Till she fair Rosamond had brought
To her sad fatal bane.
The sweet and charming precious Rose,
King Henry's chief delight!
The queen she to the bower goes,
And wrought her hateful spight:

But when she to the bower came,
Where lady Clifford lay,
Enraged Ellinor by name
She could not find the way,
Until the silken clue of thread
Became a fatal guide
Unto the queen, who laid her dead
Ere she was satisfied.

Alas! it was no small surprize
To Rosamond the fair:
When death appear'd before her eyes,
No faithful friend was there,
Who could stand up in her defence,
To put the potion by:
So, by the hands of violence,
Compell'd she was to die.

O most renowned, gracious queen,
Compassion take of me;
I wish that I had never seen
Such royal dignity.
Betray'd I was, and by degrees
A sad consent I gave;
And now, upon my bended knees,
I do your pardon crave.

I will not pardon you, she cried;
So take this fatal cup:
And you may well be satisfied,
I'll see you drink it up.
Then, with her fair and milk-white hand,
The fatal cup she took;
Which being drank, she could not stand,
But soon the world forsook.

Now when the king was well-inform'd
What Ellinor had done,
His breast he smote, in wrath he storm'd,
As if he would have run
Besides his senses; and he swore,
For this inhuman deed,
He never would bed with her more;
His royal heart did bleed.

The king did not stand pausing long,
How to reward her spleen;
But straight in a close prison strong
He cast his cruel queen:
Where she lay six and twenty years,
A long captivity,
Bathed in floods of weeping tears,
Till his death set her free.

Now when her son he did succeed
His father great Henry;
His royal mother soon he freed
From her captivity:
And she set many more at large,
Who long for debt had lain;
Her royal pity did discharge
Thousands in Richard's reign.

XIII.

The Lamentation of Queen Elinor, Wife to king Henry the Second, being kept twenty-six years in prison, who was the cause of the king's sons so unnaturally rebelled against their father: whom her son Richard when he came to be king released. And how at her deliverance she caused many prisoners to be set at liberty.

The circumstances of this ballad appear to be founded in fact. Dr. Percy, Vol. II. hath given some account of this lady, to which we must again refer the reader.

[Reprinted from The Garland of Delight.]

THRICE woe is me, unhappy queen,
Thus to offend my gracious lord:
My foul offence too plain is seen,
And of good people much abhorr'd.
I do confess my fault it was,
These bloody wars came thus to pass:

My jealous mind hath wrought my woe,
(Let all good ladies shun mistrust)
My envy wrought my overthrow;
And by my malice most unjust,
My sons did seek their father's life,
By bloody wars and cruel strife.

What more unkindness could be shown
To any prince of high renown,
Than by his queen and love alone
To stand in danger of his crown?
For this offence most worthily
In doleful prison do I lie.

But that which most torments my mind,
And makes my grievous heart complain,
Is for to think that, most unkind,
I brought myself to such disdain,
That now the king cannot abide
I should be lodged by his side.

In doleful prison I am cast,
Debarr'd of princely company:
The king's good will quite have I lost,
And purchast nought but infamy;
And never must I see him more,
Whose absence grieves my heart full sore.

Full sixteen winters have I been
Imprison'd in this dungeon deep,
Whereby my joys are wasted clean,
Where my poor eyes have learn'd to weep;
And never since I could attain
His kingly love to me again.

Too much indeed, I must confess,
I did abuse his royal grace;
And by my great maliciousness
His wrong I wrought in every place;
And thus his love I turn'd to hate,
Which I repent, but all too late.

Sweet Rosamond, that was so fair,
Out of her curious bower I brought;
A poison'd cup I gave her there,
Whereby her death was quickly wrought:
The which I did with all despite,
Because she was the king's delight.

Thus often did the queen lament,
As she in prison long did lie;
Her former deeds she did repent,
With many watery weeping eye:
But at the last this news was spread,
The king was on a sudden dead.

But when she heard these tidings told,
Most bitterly she mourned then;
Her woful heart she did unfold
In sight of many noble men.
And her son Richard being king,
From doleful prison did her bring;

Who set her for to rule his land:
While to Jerusalem he went;
And while she had his charge in hand,
Her care was great in government,
And many prisoners there in hold
She set at large from irons cold.

XIV

A Princely Song of King Richard Cordelion, and of his bold courage, and lamentable death.

A NOBLE Christian warrior,
King Richard of this land,
For fame amongst our worthies brave,
Now orderly may stand:
The god of battles gave him still
A gallant great command,
To fight for our Saviour Jesus Christ.

Richard Cordelion in this land,
A noble English name;
It fills the world with wonders great,
With honour and with fame:
Then gallantly good soldiers all,
Come thunder out the same,
That fight, &c.

When as fair Jerusalem,
The city of our lord,
Lay mourning all in heaviness,
Consumed by the sword;
To succour her, all Christendom
Did willingly accord:
And to fight, &c.

Then marched forth, most brave and bold,
King Richard from the land,
Of noble knights and gentlemen,
With him a warlike band;
To fight for Jesus Christ his name,
So long as he could stand:
All soldiers of our Saviour, &c.

But by the way such chances there
King Richard did betide,
That many of his soldiers
For want of victuals died:
A new supply this noble king
Was forced to provide,
To fight for, &c.

The mighty duke of Austria,
To whom he came for aid,
For all his kingly courtesies,
His succours were denied;
But took him prisoner cowardly,
And basely him betray'd;
Not fighting for, &c.

His noble knights and soldiers then
With sorrows went away,
Wofully complaining all,
That e're they saw that day,
That such a noble king as he
A prisoner there should stay,
And fight not for, &c.

When they are here providing
A ransom for his grace,
The duke's own son unreverently
King Richard did abase;
For which with one small box o'th' ear
He kill'd him in that place:
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

With that into a dungeon deep
This noble king was cast:
Wherein a lion (all in rage)
Provided was in haste,
To combat with this famous king,
So long as life did last:
The soldier of our Saviour, &c.

But gentle pity moved much
The daughter of that duke,
Who deeply wounded was with love,
Proceeding from his look:
For which to save his princely life,
She kindly undertook,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

A rich embroider'd scarf of silk
She secretly convey'd
Into the dungeon where the king
For execution staid;
The which, to save his gentle life,
An instrument was made,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

For when the hunger-starved beast
Into the dungeon came,
With open mouth to swallow him,
He nimbly took the same,
And stoutly thrust it down his throat,
The lion thus to tame,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

And so with valiant courage he
Pull'd out the lion's heart;
Which made the duke and all his lords
In fearful manner start,
To see this royal English king
To play so brave a part,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

I am no prisoner, said the king,
For I now am set free;
The country, and our law of arms,
Command it so to be:
And thus to England's blessed land
Most joyfully went he,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

But left his dearest love behind,
That gently sav'd his life,
With promise to return again,
To make her then his wife;
But still revenge and bloody war
Did breed them further strife,
In fighting for our Saviour, &c.

The noble hearts of Englishmen,
That could endure no wrong,
For good king Richard mustered then
A valiant army strong,
To pass the seas to Acon walls,
To lay the same along,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

So fierce consuming fire and sword
Into that country came,
Destroying all the cities brave,
And towns of ancient fame,
Till those the wrongs king Richard had,
Were righted by the same,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

But in his prime of martial worth,
This noble king was slain;
For wounded with a poisoned shaft,
That pierc'd his princely brain:
Such sorrowing moan was long time made,
Amongst his warlike train,
Still fighting for our Saviour, &c.

But chiefly by his lady fair,
So loyal and so kind,
That nothing but revenge thereof
Possessed still her mind;
To know the causer of his death,
Were rich rewards assign'd,
To the honour of our Saviour, &c.

Upon the murtherer (being found)
Much cruelty was shewn;
By her command his skin alive
Was flead from flesh and bone:
And after into dust and air
His body it was thrown,
In honour of our Saviour, &c.

Yet ended not this lady's grief,
For him she lov'd so dear.
Deep sorrows even broke her heart,
As plainly did appear:
And both were buried in one grave.
Thus true love's end you hear,
That died for our Saviour, &c.

Did ever lady, for her love,
More strangely undertake?
Did ever daughter in this kind
A grieved father make?
Did ever princess end her life
Thus for her true love's sake?
And all for our Saviour, &c.

XV.

The Pedigree, Education, and Marriage of Robin Hood with Clorinda, queen of Titbury-feast. Supposed to be related by the Fidler who played at their Wedding.

In Dr. Percy's Reliques of Antient Poetry, Vol. I. is the ballad of Robin Hood and Guy of Gisborne, to which is prefixed an account of this very celebrated Outlaw; but the most complete collection of every thing that relates to him is that published by Ritson in 2 vols. crown 8vo.; a work evincing great research, and possessing considerable merit, but disgraced by the petulance and impiety that pervade the biographical memoir and notes.

KIND gentlemen, will you be silent a while?
Ay, and then you shall hear anon
A very good ballad of bold Robin Hood,
And of his brave man Little John.

In Locksley town, in merry Nottinghamshire,
In merry sweet Locksley town,
There bold Robin Hood was born and bred,
Bold Robin of famous renown.

The father of Robin a forester was,
And he shot with a lusty strong bow,
Two north-country miles and an inch at a shot,
As the pinder of Wakefield does know;

For he brought Adam Bell, and Clim of the clough,
And William a Clowdesle,
To shoot with a forester for forty marks,
And the forester beat them all three.

His mother was niece to the Coventry knight,
Which Warwickshire men call Sir Guy;
For he slew the blue boar that hangs up at the gate,
Or my host at the bull tells a lie.

Her brother was Gamwel, of great Gamwel-hall,
A noble house-keeper was he,
Ay, as ever broke bread in sweet Nottinghamshire,
And a 'squire of famous degree.

The mother of Robin said to her husband,
My honey, my love, and my dear,
Let Robin and I ride this morning to Gamwel,
To taste of my brother's good cheer.

And he said, I grant thee thy boon, gentle Joan;
Take one of my horses, I pray;
The sun is arising, and therefore make haste,
For to-morrow is Christmas-day.

Then Robin Hood's father's grey gelding was brought,
And saddled and bridled was he;
God wot a blue bonnet, his new suit of cloaths,
And a cloak that did reach to his knee.

She got on her holiday kirtle and gown,
They were all of a Lincoln green;
The cloth was home-spun, but for colour and make
It might have beseem'd our queen.

And then Robin got on his basket-hilt sword,
And his dagger on the other side;
And said, my dear mother, let's haste to be gone,
We have forty long miles to ride.

When Robin was mounted on his gelding so grey,
His father, without any trouble,
Set her up behind him, and bid her not fear,
For his gelding had oft carried double.

And when she was settled, they rode to their neighbours,
And drank and shook hands with them all;
And then Robin gallop'd, and never gave o'er,
'Till they 'lighted at Gamwel-hall.

And now you may think the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyful his sister to see;
For he kiss'd her, and kiss'd her, and swore a great oath,
Thou art welcome, kind sister, to me.

The morrow, when mass had been said at the chapel,
Six tables were cover'd in the hall:
And in comes the 'squire, and makes a short speech;
It was, Gentlemen, you're welcome all.

But not a man here shall taste my March beer,
Till a Christmas carol he does sing;
Then all clapp'd their hands, and they shouted and sung,
'Till the hall and the parlour did ring.

Now mustard and brawn, roast beef and plumb pies,
Were set upon every table;
And noble George Gamwel said, eat and be merry,
And drink too as long as you're able.

When dinner was ended, his chaplain said grace;
And be merry, my friends, said the 'squire;
It rains and it blows; but call for more ale,
And lay some more wood on the fire.

And now call ye Little John hither to me,
For Little John is a fine lad,
At gambols and juggling, and twenty such tricks,
As shall make you both merry and glad.

When Little John came, to gambols they went,
Both gentlemen, yeomen, and clowns:
And what do you think? why, as true as I live,
Bold Robin put them all down.

And now you may think, the right worshipful 'squire
Was joyful this sight for to see;
For he said, cousin Robin, thou go'st no more home,
But tarry and dwell here with me:

Thou shalt have my land when I die, and 'till then
Thou shalt be the staff of my age.
Then grant me my boon, dear uncle, said Robin,
That Little John may be my page.

And he said, kind cousin, I grant thee thy boon;
With all my heart, so let it be.
Then come hither, Little John, said Robin Hood,
Come hither, my page, unto me:

Go fetch me my bow, my longest long bow,
And broad arrows, one, two, or three;
For when 'tis fair weather, we'll into Sherwood,
Some merry pastime to see.

When Robin Hood came into merry Sherwood,
He winded his bugle so clear;
And twice five and twenty good yeomen and bold
Before Robin hood did appear.

Where are your companions all? said Robin Hood;
For still I want forty and three.
Then said a bold yeoman, lo, yonder they stand,
All under a green-wood tree.

As that word was spoke, Clorinda came by,
The queen of the shepherds was she;
And her gown was of velvet as green as the grass,
And her buskin did reach to her knee:

Her gait it was graceful, her body was straight,
And her countenance it was free from pride;
A bow in her hand, and a quiver of arrows
Hung dangling down by her sweet side.

Her eye-brows were black, ay, and so was her hair,
And her skin was as smooth as glass;
Her visage spoke wisdom and modesty too;
Sets with Robin Hood such a lass!

Says Robin Hood, fair lady, whither away?
O whither, fair lady, away?
And she made him answer, to kill a fat buck;
For to-morrow is Titbury-day.

Said Robin Hood, lady fair, will you wander with me
A little to yonder green bower;
There sit down to rest you, and you shall be sure
Of a brace, or a leash, in an hour?

And as we were going towards the green bower,
Two hundred good bucks we espied;
She chose out the fattest that was in the herd,
And she shot him thro' side and side.

By the faith of my body, said bold Robin Hood,
I never saw woman like thee;
And com'st thou from east, or com'st thou from west,
Thou need'st not beg venison of me.

However, along to my bower you shall go,
And taste of a forester's meat;
And when we come thither, we found as good cheer,
As any man needs for to eat.

For there was hot venison, and warden pies cold,
Cream clouted, and honey-combs plenty;
And the servitors they were, besides Little John,
Good yeomen at least four and twenty.

Clorinda said, tell me your name, gentle sir;
And he said, 'tis bold Robin Hood;
'Squire Gamwel's my uncle, but all my delight
Is to dwell in the merry Sherwood;

For 'tis a fine life, and 'tis void of all strife.
So 'tis, Sir, Clorinda replied,.
But oh! said bold Robin, how sweet would it be,
If Clorinda would be my bride!

She blush'd at the motion; yet after a pause,
Said, yes, Sir, and with all my heart:
Then let us send for a priest, said Robin hood,
And be married before we do part.

But she said, it may not be so, gentle Sir,
For I must be at Titbury feast;
And if Robin Hood will go thither with me,
I'll make him the most welcome guest.

Said Robin Hood, reach me that buck, Little John,
For I'll go along with my dear;
And bid my yeomen kill six brace of bucks,
And meet me to-morrow just here.

Before he had ridden five Staffordshire miles,
Eight yeomen that were too bold,
Bid bold Robin Hood stand, and deliver his buck;
A truer tale never was told.

I will not, faith, said bold Robin: come, John,
Stand by me, and we'll beat them all. [slash'd 'em.
Then both drew their swords, and so cut 'em and
That five of the eight did fall.

The three that remain'd call'd to Robin for quarter,
And pitiful John begg'd their their lives. [counsel,
When John's boon was granted, he gave them good
And so sent them home to their wives.

This battle was fought near to Titbury town,
When the bag-pipes baited the bull:
I'm the king of the fidlers, and I swear 'tis a truth;
And I call him that doubts it, a gull;

For I saw them fighting, and fidled the while;
And Clorinda sung, "Hey derry down!
"The bumkins are beaten; put up thy sword, Bob;
"And now let's dance into the town."

Before we came in we heard a great shouting,
And all that were in it look'd madly;
For some were a bull-back, some dancing a morrice,
And some singing Arthur a-Bradley:

And there we saw Thomas, our justice's clerk,
And Mary, to whom he was kind;
For Tom rode before her, and call'd Mary, madam,
And kiss'd her full sweetly behind;

And so may your worships. But we went to dinner,
With Thomas and Mary, and Nan;
They all drank a health to Clorinda, and told her
Bold Robin Hood was a fine man.

When dinner was ended, Sir Roger the parson
Of Dubbridge was sent for in haste;
He brought his mass-book, and he bad them take hands,
And he join'd them in marriage full fast.

And then as bold Robin Hood and his sweet bride
Went hand in hand to the green bower,
The birds sung with pleasure in merry Sherwood,
And 't was a most joyful hour.

And when Robin came in sight of the bower,
Where are my yeomen? said he:
And Little John answer'd, lo, yonder they stand,
All under a green-wood tree.

Then a garland they brought her by two and by two,
And placed it on the bride's head:
The musick struck up, and we all fell to dancing,
'Till the bride and the groom were a-bed.

And what they did there must be counsel to me,
Because they lay long the next day;
And I made haste home; but I got a good piece
Of bride-cake, and so came away.

Now out, alas! I had forgotten to tell ye,
That married they were with a ring;
And so will Nan Knight, or be buried a maiden;
And now let us pray for the king,

That he may get children, and they may get more,
To govern and do us some good;
And then I'll make ballads in Robin Hood's bower,
And sing them in merry Sherwood.

XVI.

Robin Hood's Progress to Nottingham, in which he slew fifteen Foresters.

ROBIN HOOD was a tall young man,
And fifteen winters old;
And Robin Hood was a proper young man,
Of courage stout and bold,
Hey down, derry, derry down.

Robin Hood went unto fair Nottingham,
With the general for to dine;
There was he aware of fifteen foresters
Drinking beer, ale, and wine.

What news? what news? said Robin Hood,
What news fain would'st thou know?
Our king has provided a shooting match,
And I'm ready with my bow.

We hold it in scorn, said the fifteen foresters,
That ever a boy so young
Should bear a bow before our king,
That's not able to draw one string.

I'll hold you twenty marks, said bold Robin Hood,
By the leave of our lady,
That I'll hit the mark an hundred rod,
And I'll cause a hart to die.

We'll hold you twenty marks then, said the foresters,
By the leave of our lady,
Thou hit not the mark an hundred rod,
Nor cause the hart to die.

Robin Hood he bent up a noble bow,
And a broad arrow he let fly:
He hit the mark an hundred rod,
And caused a hart to die.

Some say he broke ribs one or two,
And some say he broke three;
The arrow in the hart would not abide,
But glanc'd in two or three.

The hart did skip, and the hart did leap,
And the hart lay on the ground.
The wager is mine, said Robin Hood,
If it were for a thousand pounds.

The wager is none of thine, said the foresters,
Altho' thou be'st in haste,
Take up thy bow, and get thee hence,
Least we thy sides should baste.

Robin Hood took up his noble good bow,
And his broad arrows all amain ;
And Robin, being pleas'd, began for to smile
As he went over the plain.

Then Robin he bent his noble good bow,
And his broad arrows he let fly,
Till fourteen of the fifteen foresters
Upon the ground did lie.

He that did the quarrel first begin,
Went tripping over the plain :
But Robin Hood bent his noble bow,
And fetch'd him back again.

You said, I was no archer, said Robin Hood,
But say so now again ;
With that he sent another arrow after him,
Which split his head in twain.

You have found me an archer, says bold Robin Hood,
Which will make your wives to wring,
And wish you had never said the word,
That I could not have drawn one string.

The people that did live in fair Nottingham,
Came running out amain,
Supposing to have taken bold Robin Hood,
With the foresters that were slain.

Some lost legs, and some lost arms,
And some did lose their blood:
But Robin he took up his noble bow,
And is gone to the merry green wood.

They carried their foresters to fair Nottingham,
As many there did know;
They digg'd them graves in their church-yard,
And they buried them all on a row.

XVII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE JOLLY PINDER OF WAKEFIELD.

In Wakefield there lives a jolly pinder,
In Wakefield all on the green,
In Wakefield all on the green:

There is neither knight nor 'squire, said the pinder,
Nor baron so bold,
Nor baron so bold,
Dare make a trespass to the town of Wakefield,
But his pledge goes to the pinfold,
But his pledge goes to the pinfold.

All this beheard three witty young men,
'Twas Robin Hood, Scarlet, and John;
With that they espied the jolly pinder
As he sat under a thorn,
Now turn again, now turn again, said the pinder;
For a wrong way you have gone;

For you have forsaken the king's highway,
And made a path over the corn.
O that were a shame, said jolly Robin;
We being three, and thou but one.
The pinder leap'd back then thirty good foot,
'Twas thirty good foot and one.

He lean'd his back fast to a thorn,
And his foot against a stone;
And there he fought a long summer's day,
And a summer's day so long,
'Till that their swords in their broad bucklers
Were broken fast in their hands.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said bold Robin Hood,
And my merry men every one;
For this is one of the best pinders
That ever I tried with a sword.
And wilt thou now forsake thy pinder's craft,
And live in the green wood with me?

At Michaelmas next my covenant comes out,
When every man gathers his fee;
Then I'll take my blue blade all in my hand,
And plod to the green wood with thee.
Hast either meat or drink, said Robin Hood,
For my merry men and me?

I have both bread and beef, said the pinder,
And good ale of the best,
And that's good meat enough, said Robin Hood,
For such unbidden guests.
O wilt thou forsake thy pinder's craft,
And go to the green wood with me?

Thou shalt have a livery twice in the year,
The one green, and the other brown.
If Michaelmas once was come and gone,
And my master had paid me my fee,
Then would I set as little by him,
As my master doth by me.

XVIII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BISHOP.

COME, gentlemen all, and listen a-while,
With a hey down, down, and a down,
And a story to you I'll unfold;
I'll tell you how Robin Hood served the bishop,
When he robbed him of his gold.

As it fell out on a sun-shining day,
When Phœbus was in his prime,
Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
In mirth would spend some time.

And as he walked the forest along,
Some pastime for to spy,
There he was aware of a proud bishop,
And all his company.

O what shall I do, said Robin Hood then,
If the bishop he doth take me?
No mercy he'll shew unto me, I know:
Therefore away I'll flee.

Then Robin was stout, and turn'd him about,
And a little house there he did spy;
And to an old wife, for to save his life,
He aloud began to cry.

Why, who art thou? said the old woman,
Come tell to me for good.
I am an outlaw, as many do know;
My name, it is Robin Hood.

And yonder's the bishop and all his men:
And if that I taken be,
Then day and night he'll work my spite,
And hanged I shall be.

If thou be Robin Hood, said the old woman,
As thou dost seem to be,
I'll for thee provide, thy person hide
From the bishop and his company.

For I remember one Saturday night,
Thou brought'st me both shoes and hose;
Therefore I'll provide thy person to hide,
And keep thee from thy foes.

Then give me soon my coat of gray,
And take thou my mantle of green:
Thy spindle of twine unto me resign,
And take thou my arrows so keen.

And when Robin Hood was thus array'd,
He went straight to his company,
With his spindle and twine he oft looks behind
For the bishop and his company.

O who is yonder, quoth Little John,
That now comes over the lee?
An arrow at her I will let fly,
So like an old witch looks she.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood, then,
And shoot not thy arrows so keen:
I am Robin Hood, thy master good,
As quickly shall be seen.

The bishop he came to the old woman's house,
And called with a furious mood,
Come let me see, and bring unto me
That traitor Robin Hood.

The old woman he set on a milk-white steed,
Himself on a dapple gray;
And for joy he had got Robin Hood,
He went laughing all the way.

But as they were riding the forest along,
The bishop he chanc'd for to see
A hundred brave bowmen, stout and bold,
Stand under the green-wood tree.

O who is yonder, the bishop then said,
That's ranging within yonder wood?
Marry, says the old woman, I think it be
A man called Robin Hood.

Why, who art thou, the bishop he said,
Which I have here with me?
Why I am a woman, thou cuckoldly bishop;
Lift up my leg, and see.

Then woe is me, the bishop he said,
That ever I saw this day!
He turn'd him about; but Robin Hood stout
Call'd to him and bid him stay.

Then Robin took hold of the bishop's horse,
And tied him fast to a tree;
Then Little John smil'd his master upon
For joy of that company.

Robin Hood took his mantle from his back,
And spread it upon the ground,
And out of the bishop's portmanteau he
Soon told five hundred pound.

Now let him go, said Robin Hood:
Said Little John, That must not be;
For I vow and protest he shall sing us a mass,
Before that he goes from me.

Then Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
And bound him fast to a tree,
And made him sing a mass, God wot,
To him and his yeomandree.

And then they brought him through the wood,
And set him on his dapple gray,
And gave him the tail within his hand,
And bid him for Robin Hood pray.

XIX.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BUTCHER.

Come, all you brave gallants, and listen awhile,
With a hey down, down, and a down,
That are this bower within:
For of bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
A song I intend to sing.

Upon a time it chanced so,
Bold Robin in the forest did 'spy
A jolly butcher with a fine mare,
With his flesh to the market did hie.

Good morrow, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
What food hast thou? tell unto me;
Thy trade to me tell, and where thou dost dwell
For I like well thy company.

The butcher he answer'd jolly Robin,
No matter where I dwell;
For a butcher I am, and to Nottingham
I am going my flesh, to sell.

What's the price of thy flesh? said jolly Robin,
Come tell it unto me;
And the price of thy mare, be she ever so dear,
For a butcher I fain would be.

The price of my flesh, the butcher replied,
I soon will tell unto thee;
With my bonny mare, and they are not too dear,
Four marks thou must give unto me.

Four marks I will give thee, said jolly Robin,
Four marks it shall be thy fee;
The money come count, and let me mount,
For a butcher I fain would be.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham gone,
His butcher's trade to begin;
With a good intent to the sheriff he went,
And there he took up his inn.

When other butchers did open their shops,
Bold Robin he then begun;
But how for to sell he knew not well,
For a butcher he was but young.

When other butchers no meat could sell,
Robin got both gold and fee;
For he sold more meat for one penny
Than others could do for three.

But when he sold his meat so fast,
No butcher by him could thrive;
For he sold more meat for one penny
Than others could do for five.

Which made the butchers of Nottingham
To study as they did stand,
Saying, Surely he was some prodigal,
Thad had sold his father's land.

The butchers stepp'd up to jolly Robin,
Acquainted with him to be:
Come, brother, one said, we be all of one trade
Come, will you go dine with me?

Accurs'd be his heart, said jolly Robin,
That a butcher will deny;
I will go with you, my brethren true,
As fast as I can hie.

But when they to the sheriff's house came,
To dinner they hied apace;
And Robin Hood he the man must be
Before them all to say grace.

Pray God bless us all, said jolly Robin,
And our meat within this place;
A cup of sack so good will nourish our blood,
And so I end my grace.

Come fill us more wine, said jolly Robin,
Let's be merry while we stay;
For wine and good cheer, be it ever so dear,
I vow I the reck'ning will pay.

Come, brothers, be merry, said jolly Robin,
Let's drink, and ne'er give o'er;
For the shot I will pay, ere I go my way,
If it costs me five pounds or more.

This is a mad blade, the butchers then said,
Says the sheriff, he's some prodigal,
That some land has sold for silver and gold,
And now he doth mean to spend all.

Hast thou any horned beasts, said the sheriff,
Good fellow, to sell to me?
Yes, that I have, good master sheriff,
I have hundreds two or three,

And a hundred acres of good free land,
If you please it for to see;
And I'll make you as good assurance of it,
As ever my father did me.

The sheriff he saddled his good palfrey,
And took three hundred pounds in gold,
And away he went with Robin Hood,
His horned beasts to behold.

Away then the sheriff and Robin did ride
To the forest of merry Sherwood:
Then the sheriff did say, God preserve us this day
From a man they call Robin Hood.

But when a little farther they came,
Bold Robin he chanc'd to 'spy
An hundred head of good fat deer
Come tripping the sheriff full nigh.

How like you my horned beasts, good master sheriff?
They be fat and fair to see.
I tell thee, good fellow, I would I were gone,
For I like not thy company.

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And blew out blasts three;
Then quickly anon there came Little John,
And all his company.

What is your will, master, then said Little John
I pray come tell unto me?
I have brought hither the sheriff of Nottingham
This day to dine with thee.

He is welcome to me then, said Little John;
I hope he will honestly pay:
I know he has gold, if it were but well told,
Will serve us to drink a whole day.

Then Robin took his mantle from his back,
And laid it upon the ground;
And out of the sheriff's portmanteau he
Soon told three hundred pound.

Then Robin he brought him through the wood,
And set him on his dapple gray:
O have me commended to your wife at home.
So Robin went laughing away.

XX.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE TANNER.

In Nottingham there lived a jolly tanner,
With a hey down, down, and a down,
His name is Arthur-a-Bland;
There is never a squire in Nottinghamshire,
Dare bid bold Arthur to stand.

With a long pike-staff upon his shoulder,
So well he can clear his way;
By two and by three he made them to flee,
For he hath no list to stay.

And as he went forth one summer's morning,
Into the forest of merry Sherwood,
To view the red deer, that run here and there,
There he met bold Robin Hood.

As soon as bold Robin did him espy,
He thought he some sport would make;
Therefore out of hand he bid him to stand,
And thus unto him he spake,

Why, who art thou, thou bold fellow,
That rangest so boldly here?
In sooth, to be brief, thou look'st like a thief,
That comes to steal our king's deer:

For I am a keeper in this forest;
The king puts me in trust
To look to the deer, that run here and there;
Therefore stop thee I must.

If thou be'st a keeper in this forest,
And hast such a great command,
Yet you must have more partakers in store,
Before you make me to stand.

No, I have no more partakers in store,
Or any that I do need;
But I have a staff of another oak graff,
I know it will do the deed.

For thy sword and thy bow I care not a straw,
Nor all thy arrows to boot:
If thou get'st a knock upon thy bare scop,
Thou can'st as well sh—t as shoot.

Speak cleanly, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
And give better terms unto me;
Else I'll thee correct for thy neglect,
And make thee more mannerly.

Marry gep with a wenion, quoth Arthur-a-Bland,
Art thou such a goodly man?
I care not a fig for thy looking so big;
Mend yourself where you can.

Then Robin Hood unbuckled his belt,
And laid down his bow so long:
He took up a staff of another oak graff,
That was both stiff and strong.

I yield to thy weapon, said jolly Robin,
Since thou wilt not yield to mine:
For I have a staff of another oak graff,
Not half a foot longer than thine.

But let me measure, said jolly Robin,
Before we begin the fray;
For I will not have mine to be longer than thine,
For that will be counted foul play.

I pass not for length, bold Arthur replied,
My staff is of oak so free;
Eight feet and a half, it will knock down a calf,
And I hope it will knock down thee.

Then Robin could no longer forbear,
But gave him a very good knock;
But quickly and soon the blood it ran down,
Before it was ten of the clock.

Then Arthur he soon recover'd himself,
And gave him a knock on the crown,
That from every side of Robin Hood's head
The blood ran trickling down.

Then Robin Hood raged like a wild boar,
As soon as he saw his own blood:
Then Bland was in haste, he laid on so fast,
As if he had been cleaving of wood.

And about, and about, and about they went,
Like two wild boars in a chace,
Striving to aim each other to maim,
Leg, arm, or any other place.

And knock for knock they lustily dealt,
Which held for two hours, or more;
That all the wood rang at every bang,
They plied their work so sore.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And let our quarrel fall;
For here we may thrash our bones all to mash,
And get no coin at all:

And in the forest of merry Sherwood
Hereafter thou shalt be free.
God ha' mercy for nought; my freedom I bought;
I may thank my good staff, and not thee.

What tradesman art thou, said jolly Robin,
Good fellow, I prithee me show?
And also me tell, in what place you dwell?
For both of these fain would I know.

I am a tanner, bold Arthur replied,
In Nottingham long have I wrought;
And if thou'lt come there, I vow and swear,
I'll tan your hide for nought.

God a-mercy, good fellow, said jolly Robin,
Since thou art so kind and free,
And if thou wilt tan my hide for nought,
I'll do as much for thee.

And if thou wilt forsake thy tanner's trade,
To live in the green wood with me,
My name is Robin Hood, I swear by the rood,
To give thee both gold and fee.

If thou be Robin Hood, bold Arthur replied,
As I think well thou art,
Then here's my hand, my name's Arthur-a-Bland,
We two will never part.

But tell me, O tell me, where is Little John?
Of him I fain would hear;
For we are allied by the mother's side,
And he is my kinsman dear.

Then Robin Hood blew on his bugle horn,
He blew both loud and shrill;
And quick and anon he saw Little John
Come tripping over the hill.

O what is the matter? then said Little John,
Master, I pray you tell;
Why do you stand with your staff in your hand?
I fear all is not well.

O man, I do stand, and he makes me to stand,
The tanner that stands by my side;
He is a bonny blade, and master of his trade,
For he has soundly tann'd my hide.

He is to be commended, then said Little John,
If he such a feat can do;
If he be so stout, we will have a bout,
And he shall tan my hide too.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood;
For, as I do understand,
He's a yeoman good of thy own blood,
For his name is Arthur-a-Bland.

Then Little John threw his staff away,
As far as he could fling,
And ran out of hand to Arthur-a-Bland,
And about his neck did cling.

With loving respect there was no neglect,
They were neither nice nor coy:
Each other did face with a lovely grace,
And both did weep for joy.

Then Robin Hood took them both by the hands,
And danced about the oak tree;
For three merry men, and three merry men,
And three merry men we be:

And ever hereafter, as long as we live,
We three will be as one:
The wood it shall ring, and the old wife sing,
Of Robin Hood, Arthur, and John.

XXI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE JOLLY TINKER.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
And birds sing on every tree,
Robin Hood went to Nottingham,
As fast as he could dree.

And as he came to Nottingham,
A tinker he did meet,
And seeing him a lusty blade,
He did him kindly greet:

Where dost thou dwell? quoth Robin Hood,
I pray thee now me tell;
Sad news I hear there is abroad,
I fear all is not well.

What is that news? the tinker said,
Tell me without delay:
I am a tinker by my trade,
And do live at Banbury.

As for the news, quoth Robin Hood,
It is but, as I hear,
Two tinkers were set in the stocks,
For drinking ale and beer.

If that be all, the tinker said,
As I may say to you,
Your news is not worth a fart,
Since that they all be true.

For drinking of good ale and beer,
You will not lose your part,
No, by my faith, quoth Robin Hood,
I love it with all my heart.

What news abroad? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me what thou dost hear;
Seeing thou go'st from town to town,
Some news thou need'st not fear.

All the news I have, the tinker said,
I hear it is for good;
It is to seek a bold outlaw,
Which they call Robin Hood.

I have a warrant from the king
To take him where I can;
If you can tell me where he is,
I will make you a man.

The king would give an hundred pounds,
That he could but him see:
And if we can but now him get,
It will serve thee and me.

Let me see the warrant, said Robin Hood,
I will see if it be right,
And I will do the best I can
For to take him this night.

That will I not, the tinker said,
None with it will I trust;
And where he is if you'll not tell,
Take him by force I must.

But Robin Hood perceiving well
How then the game would go,
If you would go to Nottingham,
We shall find him, I know.

A crab-tree staff the tinker had,
Which was both good and strong;
Robin he had a good strong blade:
So they went both along;

And when they came to Nottingham,
There they took up their inn;
And they called for ale and wine,
To drink it was no sin.

But ale and wine they drank so fast,
That the tinker he forgot
What thing he was about to do:
It fell so to his lot,

That, while the tinker fell asleep,
Robin made haste away,
And left the tinker in the lurch,
For the great shot to pay.

But when the tinker did awake,
And saw that he was gone,
He called out then for the host,
And thus he made his moan:

I had a warrant from the king,
Which might have done me good;
That is to take a bold outlaw,
Some call him Robin Hood:

But now the warrant and money is gone,
Nothing I have to pay;
And he that promised to be my friend,
Is gone and fled away.

That friend, you speak of, said the host,
They call him Robin Hood;
And when that he first met with you,
He meant you little good.

Had I but known it had been he,
When that I had him here,
The one of us should have tried our might,
Which should have paid full dear.

In the meantime I will away,
No longer here I'll bide;
But I will go and seek him out,
Whatever me betide.

But one thing I would gladly know,
What here I have to pay:
Ten shillings just, then said the host.
I'll pay you without delay;

Or else take here my working bag,
And my good hammer too;
And if I light but on the knave,
I will then soon pay you.

The only way, then said the host,
And not to stand in fear,
Is to seek him among the parks,
Killing of the king's deer.

The tinker he then went with speed,
And made then no delay,
Till he had found bold Robin Hood,
That they might have a fray.

At last he spied him in a park,
Hunting then of the deer.
What knave is that, quoth Robin Hood,
That doth come me so near?

No knave, no knave, the tinker said,
And that you soon shall know;
Whether of us has done any wrong,
My crab-tree staff shall show.

Then Robin drew his gallant blade,
Made then of trusty steel:
But the tinker he laid on so fast,
That he made Robin reel.

Then Robin's anger did arise ;
He fought right manfully,
Until he had made the tinker
Then almost fit to fly.

With that they laid about again,
And plied their weapons fast ;
The tinker thrash'd his bones so sore,
That he made him yield at last.

A boon, a boon, then Robin cried
If thou will grant it me :
Before I do it, the tinker said,
I'll hang thee on this tree.

But the tinker looking him about,
Robin his horn did blow :
Then came unto him Little John,
And Will Scarlet also.

What is the matter ? quoth Little John ;
You sit on the highway side :
Here is a tinker that stands by,
That hath well paid my hide.

What tinker then ? said Little John,
Fain that blade would I see ;
And I would try what I can do
If he'll do as much for me.

But Robin he then wish'd them both
They would the quarrel cease,
That henceforth we may be as one,
And ever live in peace.

And for the jovial tinker's part,
A hundred pounds I'll give
In a year to maintain him on,
As long as he doth live.

In manhood he is a mettled man,
And a metal man by trade;
Never thought I that any man
Should have made me so afraid.

And if he will be one of us,
We will take all one fare,
And whatsoever we do get,
He shall have his full share.

So the tinker he was content
With them to go along,
And with them a part to take:
And so I end my song.

XXII.

ROBIN HOOD AND ALLEN-A-DALE.

COME listen to me, you gallants so free,
All you that love mirth for to hear,
And I will tell you of a bold outlaw,
That lived in Nottinghamshire.

As Robin Hood in the forest stood,
All under the green-wood tree,
There was he aware of a brave young man,
As fine as fine could be.

The youngster was cloathed in scarlet red,
In scarlet fine and gay;
And he did frisk it over the plain,
And chaunted a round-de-lay.

As Robin Hood next morning stood
Amongst the leaves so gay,
There did he 'spy the same young man
Come drooping along the way.

The scarlet he wore the day before,
It was clean cast away;
And at every step he fetch'd a sigh,
"Alack and a-well-a-day!"

Then step'd forth brave Little John,
And Midge the miller's son,
Which made the young man bend his bow,
When as he see them come.

Stand off, stand off, the young man said,
What is your will with me?
You must come before our master straight,
Under yon green-wood tree.

And when he came bold Robin before,
Robin ask'd him courteously,
O, hast thou any money to spare
For my merry men and me?

I have no money, the young man said,
But five shillings and a ring;
And that I have kept this seven long years,
To have it at my wedding.

Yesterday I should have married a maid,
But she soon from me was ta'en,
And chosen to be an old knight's delight,
Whereby my poor heart is slain.

What is thy name? then said Robin Hood,
Come tell me without any fail,
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
My name it is Allen-a-Dale.

What wilt thou give me, said Robin Hood,
In ready gold, or fee,
To help thee to thy true love again,
And deliver her up to thee?

I have no money, then quoth the young man,
No ready gold or fee;
But I will swear upon a book,
Thy true servant to be.

How many miles is it to thy true love?
Come tell me without any guile.
By the faith of my body, then said the young man,
It is but five little miles.

Then Robin he hasted over the plain,
He did neither stint or lin,
Until he came unto the church
Where Allen should keep his wedding.

What hast thou here, the bishop then said,
I prithee now tell unto me?
I am a bold harper, quoth Robin Hood,
And the best in the north country.

O welcome, O welcome, the bishop then said;
That music best pleaseth me.
You shall have no music, quoth Robin Hood,
'Till the bride and the bridegroom I see.

With that came in a wealthy knight,
Which was both grave and old;
And after him a finikin lass
Did shine like the glittering gold.

This is not a fit match, quoth bold Robin Hood,
That you do seem to make here;
For since we are come unto the church,
The bride shall choose her own dear.

Then Robin Hood put his horn to his mouth,
And blew out blasts two or three:
Then four and twenty bowmen bold
Come leaping over the lee;

And when they came into the church-yard,
Marching all on a row,
The first man was Allen-a-Dale,
To give bold Robin his bow.

This is thy true love, Robin he said,
Young Allen, as I hear say;
And you shall be married at the same time.
Before we depart away.

That shall not be, the bishop he said,
For thy word shall not stand;
They shall be three times ask'd in the church,
As the law is of our land.

Robin Hood pull'd off the bishop's coat,
And put it upon Little John:
By the faith of my body, then Robin he said,
This cloth doth make thee a man.

When Little John went to the choir,
The people began to laugh;
He ask'd them seven times in the church,
Least three times should not be enough.

Who gives this maid? said Little John.
Quoth Robin Hood, That do I;
And he that takes her from Allen-a-Dale,
Full dearly shall her buy.

And thus having ended this merry wedding,
The bride she look'd like a queen;
And so they return'd to the merry green wood,
Amongst the leaves so green.

XXIII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE SHEPHERD.

All gentlemen, and yeomen good,
I wish you to draw near;
For a story of bold Robin Hood
Unto you I will declare.

As Robin Hood walked the forest along,
Some pastime for to 'spy,
There he was aware of a jolly shepherd,
That on the ground did lie.

Arise, arise, said jolly Robin,
And now come let me see
What's in thy bag and bottle, I say?
Come tell it unto me.

What's that to thee, thou proud fellow?
Tell me as I do stand;
What hast thou to do with my bottle and bag?
Let me see thy command.

My sword, that hangeth by my side,
Is my command, I know;
Come, let me taste of thy bottle,
Or it may breed thee woe.

The devil a drop, thou proud fellow,
Of my bottle thou shalt see,
Until thy valour here be tried,
Whether thou 'lt fight or flee.

What shall we fight for? said Robin Hood,
Come tell it unto me;
Here's twenty pounds in good red gold,
Win it and take it thee.

The shepherd stood all in amaze,
And knew not what to say;
I have no money, thou proud fellow,
But bag and bottle I will lay.

I am content, thou shepherd swain,
Fling them down on the ground;
But it will breed thee mickle pain,
To win my twenty pound.

Come draw thy sword, thou proud fellow,
That standest too long to prate;
This hook of mine shall let thee know,
A coward I do hate.

So they fell to it full hard and sore,
It was on a summer's day,
From ten to four in the afternoon
The shepherd held him in play.

Robin's buckler prov'd his chief defence,
And sav'd him many a bang;
For every blow the shepherd struck
Made Robin's sword cry twang:

Many a sturdy blow the shepherd gave,
And that bold Robin found,
'Till the blood ran trickling from his head,
Then he fell to the ground.

Arise, arise, thou proud fellow,
And thou shalt have fair play,
If thou wilt yield before thou go,
That I have won the day.

A boon, a boon, cried bold Robin;
If that a man thou be,
Then let me have my bugle horn,
And blow out blasts but three.

Then said the shepherd to bold Robin,
To that I will agree;
For if thou should'st blow till to-morrow morn,
I scorn one foot to flee,

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew with might and main,
Until he 'spied Little John
Come tripping over the plain.

Who is yonder, thou proud fellow,
That comes down yonder hill?
Yonder is John, bold Robin Hood's man,
Shall fight with thee thy fill.

What is the matter? said Little John,
Master, come tell unto me:
My case is sad, said Robin Hood,
For the shepherd hath conquer'd me.

I am glad of that, cries Little John:
Shepherd turn thou to me;
For a bout with thee I mean to have,
Either come fight or flee.

With all my heart, thou proud fellow;
For it never shall be said,
That a shepherd's hook at thy sturdy look
Will one jot be dismay'd.

So they fell to it full hard and sore,
Striving for victory.
I will know, says John, ere we give o'er,
Whether thou wilt fight or flee.

The shepherd gave John a sturdy blow
With the hook under his chin:
Beshrew thy heart, said Little John,
Thou basely dost begin.

Nay, that is nothing, said the shepherd;
Either yield to me the day,
Or I will bang thee back and sides
Before thou goest thy way.

What dost thou think, thou proud fellow,
That thou can'st conquer me?
Nay, thou shalt know, before I go,
I'll fight before I'll flee.

Again the shepherd laid on him,
The shepherd he begun:
Hold thy hand, cried jolly Robin;
I will yield the wager won.

With all my heart, said Little John,
To that I will agree;
For he is the flower of shepherd swains,
The like I ne'er did see.

Thus have you heard of Robin Hood,
Also of Little John;
How a shepherd swain did conquer them,
The like was never known.

XXV.

ROBIN HOOD'S MEETING AND FIGHTING WITH HIS COUSIN SCARLET.

Come listen awhile, you gentlemen all,
That are this bower within;
For a story of gallant Robin Hood
I purpose now to begin.

What time of day? quoth Robin Hood then:
Quoth Little John, 'tis in the prime:
Why then we will to the greenwood gang,
For we have no victuals to dine.

As Robin Hood rode the forest along,
It was in the midst of the day;
There he was aware of a deft young man,
As ever walk't on the way.

His doublet was of silk, 'tis said,
His stockings like scarlet shone:
And bravely he walk'd along the way,
To Robin Hood then unknown.

A herd of deer was in the bend,
All feeding before his face:
Now the best of you I'll have to my dinner,
And that in a little space.

Now the stranger he made no mickle ado,
But he bent a right good bow;
And the best of all the herd he slew,
Full forty yards him fro'.

Well shot, well shot, said Robin then,
That shot it was in time;
And if thou wilt accept of the place,
Thou shall be a bold yeoman of mine.

Go play the chivan, the stranger then said,
Make haste and quickly go,
Or with my fist, be sure of this,
I'll give thee buffets sto'.

Thou had'st not best buffet me, quoth Robin Hood;
For altho' I am forlorn,
Yet I have those will take my part,
If I do blow my horn.

Thou had'st not best wind thy horn, the stranger said,
Be'st thou never so much in haste,
For I can draw a good broad sword,
And quickly cut the blast.

Then Robin Hood bent a very good bow,
To shoot, and that he would fain;
The stranger he bent a very good bow,
To shoot at bold Robin again.

Hold thy hand, hold thy hand, quoth Robin Hood,
To shoot, it would be in vain;
For if we shoot the one at the other,
The one of us must be slain.

But let's take our swords and our broad bucklers,
And gang under yonder tree.
As I hope to be sav'd, the stranger he said,
One foot I will not flee.

Then Robin Hood lent the stranger a blow,
'Most scared him out of his wits:
Thou never felt blow, the stranger he said,
That shall be better quits.

The stranger then with a good broad sword
Hit Robin on the crown,
That from every hair of bold Robin Hood's head
The blood ran trickling down.

God-a-mercy, good fellow, quoth Robin Hood then,
And for this that thou hast done,
Tell me, good fellow, who thou art,
Tell me where thou do'st won.

The stranger then answer'd bold Robin Hood,
I'll tell thee where I do dwell;
In Maxfield-town I was born and bred,
My name is young Gamwel.

For killing of my father's steward,
I am forc'd to this English wood,
And for to seek an uncle of mine,
Some call him Robin Hood.

But art thou a cousin of Robin Hood then?
The sooner we shall have done:
As I hope to be sav'd, the stranger then said,
I am his own sister's son.

But, lord! what kissing and courting was there,
When these two cousins did greet!
And they went all that summer's day,
And Little John did not meet.

And when they met with Little John,
He then unto him did say;
O master, pray where have you been,
You have tarried so long away?

I met with a stranger, quoth Robin Hood,
Full sore he hath beaten me;
Then I'll have a bout with him, quoth Little John,
And try if he can beat me.

O no, O no, quoth Robin Hood then,
Little John, it may not be so;
For he is my own dear sister's son,
And cousins I have no more.

But he shall be a bold yeoman of mine,
My chief man next to thee;
And I Robin Hood, and thou Little John,
And Scarlet he shall be.

And we'll be three of the bravest outlaws
That live in the north country.
If thou wilt hear more of bold Robin Hood,
In the second part it will be.

SECOND PART,

OR,

Robin Hood, Will. Scarlet, and Little John's victory over the Prince of Arragon and the two Giants; and how Will. Scarlet married the Princess.

Now Robin Hood, Will. Scarlet, and Little John,
Are walking over the plain,
With a good fat buck, which Will. Scarlet
With his strong bow had slain.

Jog on, jog on, cries Robin Hood,
The day it runs full fast;
For tho' my nephew me a breakfast gave,
I have not broke my fast.

Then to yonder lodge let us take our way,
I think it wond'rous good,
Where my nephew by my bold yeomen,
Shall be welcom'd unto the green wood.

With that he took the bugle horn,
Full well he could it blow;
Straight from the woods came marching down
One hundred tall fellows and mo.

Stand, stand to your arms, cries Will. Scarlet,
Lo the enemies are within ken:
With that Robin Hood he laughed aloud,
Crying they are my bold yeomen.

Who when they arriv'd, and Robin espied,
Cried, Master, what is your will?
We thought you had in danger been,
Your horn did sound so shrill.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
The danger is past and gone;
I would have you welcome my nephew here,
That has paid me two for one.

In feasting and sporting they spent the day,
'Till Phœbus sunk into the deep;
Then each one to his quarters hied,
His guard there for to keep.

Long had they not walked within the green wood
But Robin he was espied
Of a beautiful damsel all alone,
That on a black palfrey did ride.

Her riding-suit was of sable-hue black,
Cyprus over her face,
Through which her rose-like cheeks did blush,
All with a comely grace.

Come tell me the cause, thou pretty one,
Quoth Robin, and tell me right,
From whence thou com'st, and whither thou go'st,
All in this mournful plight?

From London I came, the damsel replied,
From London upon the Thames,
Which circled is, O grief to tell!
Besieg'd with foreign arms,

By the proud prince of Arragon,
Who swears by his martial hand,
To have the princess to his spouse,
Or else to waste this land.

Except the champion can be found,
That dare fight three to three,
Against the prince and giants twain,
Most horrid for to see;

Whose grisly looks, and eyes like brands,
Strike terror where they come,
With serpents hissing on their helms,
Instead of feather'd plume.

The princess shall be the victor's prize,
The king hath vow'd and said;
And he that shall the conquest win,
Shall have her to his bride.

Now we are four damsels sent abroad,
To the east, west, north, and south,
To try whose fortune is so good,
To bring these champions forth:

But all in vain we have sought about,
But none so bold there are,
That dare adventure life and blood,
To free a lady fair.

When is the day? quoth Robin Hood,
Tell me this, and no more.
On midsummer next, the damsel said,
Which is in June, twenty-four.

With that the tears trickled down her cheeks,
And silent was her tongue;
With sighs and sobs she took her leave,
And away her palfrey sprung.

This news struck Robin to the heart,
He fell down on the grass;
His actions, and his troubled mind,
Shew'd he perplexed was.

Where lies your grief? quoth Will. Scarlet,
O master, tell to me;
If the damsel's eyes have pierc'd your heart,
I'll fetch her back to thee.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
She does not cause my smart;
But 'tis the poor distress'd princess
That wounds me to the heart.

I'll go and fight the giants all,
To set the lady free.
The devil take my soul, quoth Little John,
If I part with thy company.

Must I stay behind? quoth Will. Scarlet,
No, no, that must not be;
I'll make the third man in the fight,
So we shall be three to three.

These words cheer'd Robin to the heart,
Joy shone upon his face;
Within his arms he hugg'd them both,
And kindly did embrace.

Quoth he, We'll put on motley grey,
With long staves in our hands,
A scrip and bottle by our sides,
As come from the holy lands.

So we may pass along the highway,
None will ask us from whence we came,
But take us pilgrims for to be,
Or else some holy men.

Now they are on their journey gone,
As fast as they may speed;
Yet for all their haste, ere they arriv'd,
The princess forth was led,

To be deliver'd to the prince,
Who in the list did stand,
Prepar'd to fight, or else receive
His lady by the hand.

With that he walk'd about the list,
With giants by his side;
Bring forth, said he, your champions,
Or bring me forth my bride:

This is the four and twentieth day,
The day prefix'd upon;
Bring forth my bride, or London burns,
I swear by Alcaron.

Then cries the king, and queen likewise,
Both weeping as they spake,
Lo! we have brought our daughter dear,
Whom we are forc'd to forsake.

With that stept out bold Robin Hood,
Cries, my liege, it must not be so;
Such beauty as the fair princess
Is not for a tyrant's mow.

The prince he then begun to storm,
Cries, fool, fanatick, baboon!
How dare you stop my valour's prize?
I'll kill thee with a frown.

Thou tyrant, Turk, thou infidel,
Thus Robin began to reply,
Thy frowns I scorn; lo! here's my gage,
And thus I thee defy.

And for those two Goliahs there,
That stand on either side,
Here are two little Davids by
That soon can tame their pride.

Then the king did for armour send,
For lances, swords, and shields;
And thus all three in armour bright
Came marching into the field.

The trumpets began to sound a charge,
Each singled out his man;
Their arms in pieces soon were hew'd,
Blood sprang from every vein.

The prince reach'd Robin Hood a blow,
He struck with might and main,
Which made him reel about the field,
As though he had been slain.

God-a-mercy, quoth Robin, for that blow
The quarrel shall soon be tried;
This stroke shall shew a full divorce
Betwixt thee and thy bride.

So from his shoulders he cut his head,
Which on the ground did fall,
And grumbled sore at Robin Hood,
To be so dealt withal.

The giants then began to rage
To see their prince lie dead;
Thou wilt be the next, says Little John,
Unless thou guard thy head.

With that his falchion he whirl'd about,
It was both keen and sharp;
He clave the giant to the belt,
And cut in twain his heart.

Will. Scarlet well had play'd his part,
The giant he brought to his knee;
Quoth Will. The devil cannot break his fast,
Unless he have you all three.

So with his falchion he run him through,
A deep and ghastly wound;
Who damn'd and foam'd, curs'd and blasphem'd,
And then fell to the ground.

Now all the lists with shouts were fill'd,
The skies they did resound,
Which brought the princess to herself,
Who had fallen into a swoon.

The king and queen, and princess fair,
Came walking to the place,
And gave the champions many thanks,
And did them farther grace.

Tell me, quoth the king, whence you are,
That thus disguised came,
Whose valour speaks that noble blood
Doth run through every vein.

A boon, a boon, quoth Robin Hood,
On my knees I beg and crave.
By my crown, quoth the king, I grant;
Ask what, and thou shalt have.

Then pardon I beg for my merry men,
Which are in the green wood,
For Little John and Will. Scarlet,
And for me, bold Robin Hood.

Art thou Robin Hood? quoth the king;
For thy valour thou hast shewn,
Your pardon I do freely grant,
And welcome every one.

The princess I promised the victor's prize;
She cannot have you all three.
She shall chuse, quoth Robin; said Little John,
Then little share falls to me.

Then did the princess view all three,
With a comely lovely grace,
And took Will. Scarlet by the hand,
Saying, here I make my choice.

With that a noble lord stept forth,
Of Maxfield earl was he,
Who look'd Will. Scarlet in the face,
Then wept most bitterly.

Quoth he, I had a son like thee,
Whom I lov'd wondrous well;
But he is gone, or rather dead,
His name it is young Gamwel.

Then did Will. Scarlet fall on his knees,
Cries, father, father, here,
Here kneels your son, your young Gamwel,
You said, you lov'd so dear.

But, lord, what embracing and kissing was there
When all these friends were met!
They are gone to the wedding, and so to the bedding,
And so I bid you good night.

XXV.

The famous Battle between Robin Hood and the Curtal Friar, near Fountain-Dale.

In summer time, when leaves grow green,
And flowers are fresh and gay,
Robin Hood and his merry men
Were all disposed to play.

Then some would leap, and some would run,
And some would use artillery;
Which of you can a good bow draw,
A good archer for to be?

Which of you can kill a buck;
Or, who can kill a doe?
Or who can kill a hart of Greece
Five hundred foot him fro'?

Will. Scarlet, he did kill a buck,
And Midge did kill a doe;
And Little John kill'd a hart of Greece
Five hundred foot him fro',

God's blessing on thy heart, said Robin Hood,
That shot such a shot for me;
I would ride my horse an hundred miles,
To find one could match thee.

That caused Will. Scarlet to laugh,
He laughed full heartily:
There lives a friar in Fountain-abbey
Will beat both him and thee.

The curtal friar in Fountain-abbey
Well can a strong bow draw;
He will beat you and your yeomen,
Set them all on a row.

Robin Hood took a solemn oath,
It was by Mary free,
That he would neither eat nor drink
'Till the friar he did see.

Robin Hood put on his harness good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side;
And they became him weel.

He took his bow into his hand,
It was of a trusty tree,
With a sheaf of arrows by his side,
And to Fountain-dale went he.

And coming to fair Fountain-dale,
No farther would he ride;
There he was aware of a curtal-friar
Walking by the water-side.

The friar had on a harness good,
On his head a cap of steel,
Broad sword and buckler by his side;
And they became him weel.

Robin Hood lighted from off his horse,
And tied him to a thorn;
Carry me over the water, thou curtal friar,
Or else thy life's forlorn.

The friar took Robin Hood on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And neither spoke good word nor bad,
'Till he came on the other side.

Lightly stept Robin off the friar's back:
The friar said to him again,
Carry me over the water, thou fine fellow,
Or it will breed thy pain.

Robin Hood took the friar on his back,
Deep water he did bestride,
And spoke neither good word nor bad,
'Till he came on the other side.

Lightly leapt the friar off Robin Hood's back:
Bold Robin said to him again,
Carry me over the water, thou curtal friar,
Or it shall breed thee pain.

The friar took Robin on his back again,
And stept up to his knee;
And 'till he came to the middle stream,
Neither good nor bad spoke he:

And coming to the middle stream,
Then he threw Robin in;
And chuse thee, chuse thee, fine fellow,
Whether thou wilt sink or swim.

Robin Hood swam to a bush of broom,
The friar to the willow wand:
Bold Robin Hood is gone to the shore,
And took his bow in his hand.

One of the best arrows under his belt
To the friar he let fly;
The curtal friar with his steel buckler
Did put his arrow by.

Shoot on, shoot on, thou fine fellow,
Shoot as thou hast begun;
If thou shoot here a summer's day,
Thy mark I will not shun.

Robin Hood shot on so passing well,
'Till his arrows all were gone;
They took their swords and steel buckler,
And fought with might and main,

From ten o'clock that very day,
'Till four in the afternoon;
Then Robin Hood came on his knees,
Of the friar to beg a boon.

A boon, a boon, thou curtal friar,
I beg it on my knee;
Give me leave to set my horn to my mouth,
And to blow blasts three.

That I will do, said the curtal friar,
Of thy blasts I have no doubt;
I hope thou'lt blow so passing well,
'Till both thy eyes drop out.

Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
And blew out blasts three:
Half an hundred yeomen, with their bows bent,
Came ranging over the lee.

Whose men are these, said the friar,
That come so hastily?
Those are mine, said Robin Hood,
Friar, what's that to thee?

A boon, a boon, said the curtal friar,
The like I gave to thee;
Give me leave to set my fist to my mouth,
And to *whute whutes three.

That will I do, said Robin Hood,
Or else I were to blame;
Three whutes in a friar's fist
Would make me glad and fain.

The friar he set his fist to his mouth,
And whuted him whutes three;
Half a hundred good band dogs
Came running over the lee.

Here is for every man a dog,
And I myself for thee:
Nay, by my faith, said Robin Hood,
Friar, that may not be.

Two dogs at once to Robin did go,
The one behind, the other before;
Robin Hood's mantle of Lincoln green
From off his back they tore.

* Whistle.

And whether his men shot east or west,
Or they shot north or south,
The curtal dogs, so taught they were,
They caught the arrows in their mouths.

Take up thy dogs, said Little John,
Friar, at my bidding thee.
Whose man art thou, said the curtal friar,
Comes here to prate to me?

I am Little John, Robin Hood's man,
Friar, I will not lie:
If thou take not thy dogs anon,
I'll take them up and thee.

Little John had a bow in his hand,
He shot with might and main;
Soon half a score of the friar's dogs
Laid dead upon the plain.

Hold thy hand, good fellow, said the curtal friar,
Thy master and I will agree,
And we will have new orders taken
With all the haste that may be.

If thou wilt forsake fair Fountain-dale
And Fountain-abbey free,
Every Sunday throughout the year
A noble shall be thy fee.

Every Sunday throughout the year
Changed shall thy garment be,
If thou wilt go to fair Nottingham,
And there remain with me.

The curtal friar had kept Fountain-dale
Seven long years, and more:
There was neither knight, lord, nor earl,
Could make him yield before.

XXVI.

RENOWNED ROBIN HOOD;

OR,

His famous Archery truly related, in the worthy Exploits he performed before Queen Catherine

Gold ta'en from the king's harbingers,
As seldom hath been seen,
And carried by bold Robin Hood,
For a present to the queen.

If that I live one year to an end,
Thus did queen Catherine say;
Bold Robin Hood, I'll be thy friend,
And all thy yeomen gay.

The queen is to her chamber gone,
As fast as she could run;
She calls unto her lovely page,
His name was Richard Partington.

Come thou hither to me, thou lovely page,
Come thou hither to me;
For thou must post to Nottingham,
As fast as thou can'st dree;

And as thou go'st to Nottingham,
Search every English wood,
Enquire of one good yeoman or another,
That can tell thee of bold Robin Hood.

Sometimes he walk'd, sometimes he ran,
As fast as he could wen,
And when he came to Nottingham,
There he took up his inn.

He calls for a bottle of Rhenish wine,
And drinks a health to the queen,
Wishing he might now speedily
Find out jolly Robin.

There set a yeoman by his side,
Who said, Sweet page, tell me
What is thy business, and thy cause,
So far in the north country?

This is my business and my cause,
Sir, I'll tell it you for good,
To enquire of one good yeoman or another,
To tell me of Robin Hood.

I'll get my horse betimes in the morn,
Be it by break of day,
And I will shew thee bold Robin Hood,
And all his yeomen gay.

When that he came to Robin Hood's place,
He fell down on his knee,
Queen Catherine she does greet you well,
She greets you well by me.

She bids you post to fair London court,
Not fearing any thing;
For there shall be a little sport,
And she has sent you her ring.

Robin Hood took his mantle from his back,
It was of Lincoln green,
And sent it by this lovely page,
For a present to the queen.

In summer-time, when leaves grow green,
'Twas a seemly sight to see,
How Robin Hood had drest himself
And all his yeomandree.

He cloathed his men in Lincoln green,
And himself in scarlet red;
Black hats, white feathers all alike,
Now bold Robin Hood is rid.

And when he came to London court,
He fell down on his knee.
Thou art welcome, Locksley, said the queen,
And all thy yeomandree.

The king is into Finsbury field,
Marching in battle ray,
And after follows bold Robin Hood
And all his yeomen gay.

Come hither, Tepus, said the king,
Bow-bearer after me;
Come measure me out with this line,
How long our mark must be.

What is the wager? said the queen,
For that I must know here;
There hundred tun of Rhenish wine,
Three hundred tun of beer,

Three hundred of the fattest harts
That run on Dallen lee;
That's a princely wager, said the queen,
That I must needs tell thee.

With that bespoke one Clifton then,
Full quickly and full soon,
Measure no mark for us, most sovereign liege,
We will shoot at sun and moon.

Full fifteen score your marks shall be,
Full fifteen score shall stand:
I'll lay my bow, said Clifton then,
I'll cleave the willow wand.

With that the king's archers led about,
'Till it was three to one;
With that the ladies began for to shout,
Madam, your game is gone.

A boon, a boon, queen Catherine cries,
I crave it on my knee,
Is there ever a knight of your privy council
On queen Catherine's side will be?

Come hither to me, Sir Robert Lee,
Thou art a knight full good;
For I do know by thy pedigree,
Thou sprung'st from Gower's blood.

Come hither to me, thou bishop of Herefordshire,
For a noble priest was he;
By my silver mitre, said the bishop then,
I'll not bet one penny.

The king has archers of his own
Full ready and full right:
And these be strangers every one,
No man knows what they hight.

What wilt thou bet? said Robin Hood,
Thou see'st our game's the worse.
By my silver mitre, then said the bishop,
All the money within my purse.

What is in thy purse? said Robin Hood
Now throw it on the ground.
Ninety-nine angels, said the bishop,
It's near an hundred pound.

Robin Hood took his bag from his side,
And threw it on the green;
Will Scarlet then went smiling away,
I know who this money must win.

With that the king's archers led about,
While it was three to three;
With that the ladies gave a shout,
Woodcock, beware thy knee.

It is three to three now, said the king,
The next three pays for all;
Robin Hood went and whisper'd the queen,
The king's part shall be but small,

Then Robin Hood did leap about,
He shot it under hand;
And Clifton with a bearing arrow,
He clave the willow wand.

And little Midge, the miller's son,
He shot not much the worse;
He shot within a finger of the prick;
Now, bishop, beware thy purse.

A boon, a boon, queen Catherine cries,
I crave it on my bare knee,
That you will angry be with none
That are of my party.

They shall have forty days to come,
And forty days to go,
And three times forty to sport and play;
Then welcome, friend or foe.

Thou art welcome, Robin Hood, said the queen,
And so is Little John,
And so is Midge the miller's son:
Thrice welcome every one.

Is this Robin Hood? the king then said,
For it was told to me,
That he is slain in the palace gate,
So far in the north country.

Is this Robin Hood? quoth the bishop then,
As it seems well to be;
Had I known it had been that bold outlaw,
I would not have bet one penny.

He took me late one Sunday night,
And bound me fast to a tree,
And made me sing a mass, God wot,
To him and his yeomandree.

What, and if I did, says Robin Hood,
Of that mass I was full fain;
For recompence of that, he says,
Here's half thy gold again.

Now nay, now nay, says Little John,
Master, that may not be,
We must give gifts to the kings officers;
That gold will serve thee and me.

XXVII.

ROBIN HOOD'S CHACE;

OR,

A merry Progress between Robin Hood and King Henry.

COME, you gallants all, to you I call,
That now are in this place;
For a song I will sing of Henry our king,
How he did bold Robin Hood chace.

Queen Catherine she then a match did make,
As plainly doth appear,
For three hundred tun of good red wine,
And three hundred tun of beer:

But yet she had her archers to seek,
With their bows and arrows so good;
But her mind it was bent, with a full intent,
To send for bold Robin Hood.

But when bold Robin Hood he came there,
Queen Catherine she did say,
Thou art welcome, Locksley, unto me,
And all thy yeomen gay.

For a match of shooting I have made,
And thou on my part must be.
If I miss the mark, be it light or dark,
Then hanged I will be.

But when the game came to be play'd,
Bold Robin he then drew nigh
With his mantle of green, most brave to be seen,
He let his arrows fly.

And when the game it ended was,
Bold Robin won it with grace,
But after the king was angry with him,
And vowed he would him chace.

What tho' his pardon granted was,
While he with him did stay;
But yet the king was vex'd at him
When he was gone away.

Soon after the king from court did hie,
In a furious angry mood,
And often enquired both far and near
After bold Robin Hood.

But when the king to Nottingham came,
Bold Robin was in the wood:
O come, said he, and let me see
Who can find bold Robin Hood.

But when bold Robin he did hear
The king had him in chace;
Then said Little John, 'Tis time to be gone,
And that to another place.

And away they went from merry Sherwood,
And into Yorkshire he did hie:
And the king did follow with a hoop and a hallo,
But could not him come nigh.

Yet jolly Robin he passed along,
And went straight to Newcastle town;
And there they staid hours two or three,
And then he to Berwick was gone.

When the king did see how Robin did flee,
He was vexed and wondrous sore;
With a hoop and a hallo he vowed to follow,
And take him, or never give o'er.

Come now let's away, said Little John,
Let any man follow that dare;
To Carlisle we'll hie, with our company,
And so then to Lancaster.

From Lancaster then to Chester he went,
And so did good king Henry;
But Robin went away, for he durst not stay,
For fear of some treachery.

Says Robin, Come let us for London go,
To see our noble queen's face:
It may be she wants our company,
Which makes the king us chace.

When Robin he came queen Catherine before,
He fell upon his knee;
If it please your grace, I am come to this place,
To speak with king Henry.

Queen Catherine answer'd bold Robin again
The king is gone to merry Sherwood;
And when he went away, to me he did say,
He would go and seek Robin Hood.

Then fare you well, my gracious queen,
For to Sherwood I'll hie apace;
For fain would I see what he'd have with me,
If I could but meet with his grace.

But when king Henry he came home,
Full weary, and vex'd in mind;
And that he did hear Robin had been there,
He blamed dame fortune unkind.

You're welcome home, queen Catherine cried,
Henry, my sovereign liege;
Bold Robin Hood, that archer good,
Your person hath been to seek.

But when king Henry he did hear
That Robin had been there him to seek,
This answer he gave, He's a cunning knave,
For I have sought him this whole three weeks.

A boon, a boon, queen Catherine cried,
I beg it here of your grace,
To pardon his life, and seek not strife;
And so ends Robin Hood's chace.

XXVIII.

ROBIN HOOD'S GOLDEN PRIZE.

Shewing how he robb'd two Priests of five hundred pounds.

I HAVE heard talk of Robin Hood,
And of brave Little John,
Of friar Tuck, and Will Scarlet,
Locksley, and maid Marian.

But such a tale as this before,
I think, was never known;
For Robin Hood disguised himself,
And from the wood is gone.

Like to a friar bold Robin Hood
Was accoutred in his array:
With hood, gown, beads, and crucifix,
He passed upon the way.

He had not gone past miles two or three,
But it was his chance to spy
Two lusty priests, clad all in black,
Come riding gallantly.

Benedicite, then said Robin Hood,
Some pity on me take;
Cross you my hand with a single groat,
For our dear lady's sake:

For I have been wand'ring all this day,
And nothing could I get;
Not so much as one poor cup of drink,
Nor bit of bread to eat.

Now by our holy dame, the priests replied,
We never a penny have;
For we this morning have been robb'd,
And could no money save.

I am much afraid, said bold Robin Hood,
That you do both tell a lie;
And now before you do go hence,
I am resolv'd to try.

When as the priests heard him say so,
Then they rode away amain;
But Robin Hood betook to his heels,
And soon overtook them again.

Then Robin Hood laid hold of them both,
And pull'd them down from their horse.
O spare us, friar, the priest cried out,
On us have some remorse.

You said, you had no money, quoth Robin Hood;
Wherefore, without delay,
We three will fall down on our knees,
And for money we will pray.

The priests they could not him gainsay,
But down they kneel with speed:
Send us, O send us, then quoth they,
Some money to serve our need.

The priests did pray with mournful cheer,
Sometimes their hands did wring;
Sometimes they wept and tore their hair,
Whilst Robin did merrily sing.

When they had been praying for an hour's space,
The priests did still lament;
Then quoth bold Robin, Now let's see
What money heaven hath us sent.

We will be sharers all alike
Of money that we have;
And there is never a one of us
That his fellow shall deceive.

The priests their hands in their pockets put,
But money would find none:
We will search ourselves, said Robin Hood,
Each other, one by one.

Then Robin Hood took pains to search them,
And found good store of gold;
Five hundred pieces presently
Upon the grass he told.

Here is a brave shew, said Robin Hood,
Such store of gold to see;
And you each one shall have a part,
Because you prayed so heartily.

He gave them fifty pounds a piece,
And the rest himself did keep:
The priests they durst not speak one word,
But sighing wond'rous deep.

With that the priests rose from their knees,
Thinking to have parted so:
Nay, nay, says Robin Hood, one thing more,
I have to say ere you go:

You shall be sworn, says bold Robin Hood,
Upon this holy grass,
That you will never tell lies again,
Which way soever you do pass.

The second oath that you here must make,
That all the days of your lives,
You never shall tempt maids to sin,
Nor lie with other men's wives.

The last oath you shall take, is this,
Be charitable to the poor;
Say you have met with a holy friar,
And I desire no more.

He set them on their horses again,
And away then they did ride;
And he return'd to the merry green wood,
With great joy, mirth, and pride.

XXIX.

Robin Hood rescuing Will. Stutely from the Sheriff and his Men, who had taken him prisoner, and were going to hang him.

When Robin Hood in the green wood stood,
Under the green-wood tree,
Tidings there came to him with speed,
Tidings for certainty,

That Will. Stutely surprized was,
And eke in prison lay;
Three varlets, that the sheriff had hir'd,
Did basely him betray,

Ay, and to-morrow hanged must be,
To-morrow as soon as 'tis day;
Before they could the victory get,
Two of them did Stutely slay.

When Robin Hood did hear this news,
Lord! it did grieve him sore;
And to his merry men he did say,
Who altogether swore,

That Will. Stutely should rescu'd be,
And be brought back again;
Or else should many a gallant wight
For his sake there be slain:

He cloathed himself in scarlet then,
His men were all in green;
A finer show throughout the world
In no place could be seen.

Good lord! it was a gallant sight
To see them all on a row;
With every man a good broad sword,
And eke a good yew bow.

Forth of the green wood are they gone,
Yea all courageously,
Resolving to bring Stutely home,
Or every man to die.

And when they came the castle near,
Wherein Will. Stutely lay;
I hold it good, said Robin Hood,
We here in ambush stay,

And send one forth some news to hear,
To yonder palmer fair,
That stands under the castle-wall:
Some news he may declare.

With that steps forth a brave young man,
Which was of courage bold:
Thus he did speak to the old man,
I pray thee, palmer old,

Tell me, if thou can rightly ken,
When must Will. Stutely die,
Who is one of bold Robin Hood's men,
And here doth prisoner lie.

Alas! alas! the palmer said,
And for ever woe is me!
Will Stutely hang'd will be this day,
On yonder gallows tree.

O, had his noble master known,
He would some succour send:
A few of his bold yeomandree
Full soon would fetch him hence.

Ay, that is true, the young man said;
Ay, that is true, said he;
Or if they were near to this place,
They soon would set him free.

But fare thee well, thou good old man,
Farewell, and thanks to thee;
If Stutely hanged be this day,
Reveng'd his death will be.

No sooner was he from the palmer gone,
But the gates were open'd wide,
And out of the castle Will. Stutely came,
Guarded on every side.

When he was forth from the castle come,
And saw no help was nigh;
Thus he did say unto the sheriff,
Thus he said gallantly:

Now seeing that I needs must die,
Grant me one boon, says he;
For my noble master ne'er had man
That yet was hang'd on a tree.

Give me a sword all in my hand,
And let me be unbound,
And with thee and thy men I'll fight,
'Till I lie dead on the ground.

But this desire he would not grant,
His wishes were in vain;
For the sheriff swore he hang'd should be,
And not by the sword be slain.

Do but unbind my hands, he says,
I will no weapon crave;
And if I hanged be this day,
Damnation let me have.

O no, O no, the sheriff said,
Thou shalt on the gallows die;
Ay, and so shall thy master too,
If ever in me it lie.

O dastard coward, Stutely cries,
Thou faint-heart peasant slave!
If ever my master do thee meet,
Thou shalt thy payment have.

My noble master doth thee scorn,
And all thy coward crew;
Such silly imps unable are
Bold Robin to subdue.

But when he was to the gallows gone,
And ready to bid adieu,
Out of a bush leaps Little John,
And comes Will. Stutely to;

I pray thee, Will. before thou die,
Of thy dear friends take leave;
I needs must borrow him awhile;
How say you, master shrieve?

Now, as I live, the sheriff said,
That varlet will I know:
Some sturdy rebel is that same,
Therefore let him not go.

Then Little John most hastily
Away cut Stutely's bands,
And from one of the sheriff's men
A sword twitch'd from his hands.

Here, Will. here, take thou this same,
Thou can'st it better sway;
And here defend thyself awhile,
For aid will come straightway.

And there they turn'd them back to back,
In the midst of them that day,
'Till Robin Hood approached near,
With many an archer gay.

With that an arrow from them flew,
I wist from Robin Hood:
Make haste, make haste, the sheriff he said;
Make haste, for it is good.

The sheriff is gone, his doughty men
Thought it no boot to stay;
But, as their master had them taught,
They ran full fast away.

O stay, O stay, Will. Stutely said,
Take leave ere you depart:
You ne'er will catch bold Robin Hood,
Unless you dare him meet.

O ill betide you, quoth Robin Hood,
That you so soon are gone;
My sword may in the scabbard rest,
For here our work is done.

I little thought, Will. Stutely said,
When I came to this place,
For to have met with Little John,
Or seen my master's face.

Thus Stutely was at liberty set,
And safe brought from his foe:
O thanks, O thanks to my master,
Since here it was not so.

And once again, my fellows all,
We shall in the green wood meet,
Where we will make our bow-strings twang,
Music for us most sweet.

XXX.

THE NOBLE FISHER-MAN;

OR,

Robin Hood's Preferment.

In summer time when leaves grow green,
When they do grow both green and long,
Of a bold outlaw call'd Robin Hood,
It is of him I sing this song.

When the lilly leaf, and the elephant
Do bud and spring with a merry cheer,
This outlaw was weary of the wood side,
And chasing of the fallow deer.

The fishermen brave more money have
Than any merchant two or three;
Therefore I will to Scarborough go,
That I a fisherman brave may be.

This outlaw call'd his merry men all,
As they sate under the green-wood tree:
If any of you have gold to spend,
I pray you heartily spend it with me.

Now, quoth Robin Hood, I'll to Scarborough go,
It seems to be a very fair day:
He took up his inn at a widow woman's house,
Hard by upon the water gray,

Who asked him, where wert thou born?
Or tell to me where dost thou fare?
I am a poor fisherman, said he then,
This day intrapped all in care.

What is thy name, thou fine fellow?
I pray thee heartily tell to me.
In mine own country, where I was born,
Men call me Simon over the Lee.

Simon, Simon, said the good wife;
I wish thou may'st well brook thy name.
The outlaw was ware of her courtesy,
And rejoiced he had got such a dame.

Simon, wilt thou be my man?
And good round wages I'll give thee;
I have a good ship of my own,
As any sails upon the sea.

Anchors and planks thou shalt want none,
Masts and ropes that are so long.
And if that you thus furnish me,
Said Simon, nothing shall go wrong.

They pluck'd up anchor, and away did sail,
More of a day than two or three;
When others cast in their baited hooks,
The bare lines into the sea cast he.

It will be long, said the master then,
Ere this great lubber do thrive on the sea;
He shall have no share in our fish,
For in truth he is in no part worthy.

O woe is me, said Simon then,
This day that I ever came here;
I wish I were in Plumpton-park,
Chasing of the fallow deer:

For every clown laughs me to scorn,
And they by me set nought at all;
If I had them in Plumpton-park,
I would set as little by them all.

They pluck'd up anchor, and away did sail,
More of a day than two or three;
But Simon 'spied a ship of war,
That sail'd toward them most valorously.

O woe is me, said the master then,
This day that ever I was born;
For all our fish that we have got
Is every bit lost and forlorn!

For yon French robbers on the sea,
They will not spare of us one man,
But carry us to the coast of France,
And lay us in a prison strong.

But Simon said, do not fear them,
Neither, master, take you care;
Give me a bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

Hold thy peace, thou long lubber,
For thou art nought but brags and boast:
If I should cast you over board,
There is but a simple lubber lost.

Simon grew angry at these words,
And so angry then was he:
Then he took his bent how in his hand,
And in the ship hatch goeth he.

Master, tie me to the mast, he said,
That at my mark I may stand fair,
And give me my bent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

He drew his arrow to the head,
And drew it with all might and main;
And straight, in the twinkling of an eye,
To the Frenchman's heart the arrow's gone.

The Frenchman fell down on the hatch,
And under the hatches down below;
Another Frenchman that him espied,
The dead corpse into the sea did throw.

O master, loose me from the mast, he said,
And for them all take you no care;
And give me my hent bow in my hand,
And never a Frenchman will I spare.

Then straight they boarded the French ship,
They lying all dead in their sight;
They found within the ship of war
Twelve thousand pounds of money bright.

The one half of the ship, said Simon then,
I'll give to my dame and her children small;
The other half of the ship I'll give
To you, that are my fellows all.

But now bespake the master then,
For so, Simon, it shall not be;
For you have won it with your own hands,
And the owner of it you shall be;

It shall be so as I have said,
And with this gold for the opprest
An habitation will I build,
Where they shall live in peace and rest.

XXXI.

ROBIN HOOD'S DELIGHT;

OR,

A merry Combat fought between Robin Hood, Little John, and Will. Scarlet, with three stout Keepers in Sherwood Forest.

THERE'S some will talk of lords and knights,
And some of yeomen good:
But I will tell you of Will. Scarlet,
Little John, and Robin Hood.

They were outlaws, as 'tis well known,
And men of noble blood;
And many a time their valour was shown
In the forest of merry Sherwood.

Upon a time it chanced so,
As Robin would have it be,
They all three would a walking go,
Some pastime for to see.

And as they walked the forest along,
Upon a midsummer's day,
There was he aware of three foresters,
Clad all in green array.

With brave long falchions by their sides,
And forest bills in hand,
They called aloud to these outlaws,
And charged them to stand.

Why, who are you? cried bold Robin,
That speak so boldly here;
We three belong to king Henry,
And are keepers of his deer.

The devil you are, says Robin Hood,
I am sure it is not so:
We be the keepers of this forest,
And that you soon shall know.

Your coats of green lay on the ground,
And so we will all three,
And take your swords and bucklers round,
And try the victory.

We be content, the keepers said,
We be three and you no less;
Then why should we be of you afraid,
As we never did transgress?

Why, if you be keepers in this forest,
We be three rangers good,
And will make you know, before you do go,
You met with bold Robin Hood.

We be content, thou bold outlaw,
Our valour here to try,
And will make you know, before we do go,
We will fight before we fly.

Then, come draw your swords, you bold outlaws,
No longer stand to prate,
But let us try it straight with blows,
For cowards we do hate.

Here is one for Will. Scarlet,
And another for Little John,
And I myself for Robin Hood,
Because he is stout and strong.

So they fell to it full hard and sore,
It was on a midsummer day;
From eight of the clock, 'till two and past,
They all shew'd gallant play.

There Robin, Will. and Little John,
They fought most manfully,
'Till all their wind was spent and gone,
Then Robin aloud did cry:

O hold, O hold, cries bold Robin,
I see you be stout men;
Let me blow one blast on my bugle horn,
Then I'll fight with you again.

That bargain's to make, Robin Hood,
Therefore we it deny;
Thy blast upon the bugle horn
Cannot make us fight or fly.

Therefore fall on, or else be gone,
And yield to us the day:
It never shall be said that we are afraid
Of thee, or thy yeomen gay.

If that be so, cries Robin Hood,
Let me but know your names,
And in the forest of merry Sherwood,
I shall extoll your fames.

And with our names, one of them said,
What hast thou here to do?
Except thou will now fight it out,
Our names thou shalt not know.

We'll fight no more, says bold Robin,
You be men of valour stout;
Come and go with me to Nottingham,
And there we will fight it out.

With a but of sack we will bang it about,
To see who wins the day;
And for the cost make you no doubt,
I have gold enough to pay:

And ever hereafter as long as we live,
We all will brethren be;
For I love those men with heart and hand,
That will fight and never flee.

So away they went to Nottingham,
With sack to make amends;
In three days they the wine did chace,
And drank themselves good friends.

XXXII.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE BEGGAR.

The late Mr. Ritson, in the first volume of his Robin Hood, published the following Poem as "a North Country (or Scotish) composition of some antiquity, from a modern copy, printed at Newcastle, where he accidentally picked it up: no other having to his knowledge been ever seen or heard of." Mr. Ritson had however, to regret that some of the stanzas in his copy were defective. The Editor is enabled to restore the ballad to its integrity, from another modern copy, printed in Scotland, which supplies the hiatus of the former, though otherwise very incorrectly printed, and wanting several stanzas. For this advantage the reader is indebted to Mr. Haslewood, who most obligingly, and liberally communicated it. The remark on verse seven, accompanied the communication to the Publisher, who has therefore taken the liberty of subjoining the Author's name to it.

Lyth and listen, gentlemen,
That be of high born blood;
I'll tell you of a brave booting
That befell Robin Hood.

Robin Hood upon a day,
He went forth him alone,
And as he came from Barnsdale*
Into a fair evening.

He met a beggar on the way,
Who sturdily could gang;
He had a pike-staff in his hand
That was both stark and strang.

A clouted † clock about him was,
That held him frae the cold,
The thinnest bit of it, I guess,
Was more than twenty fold.

His meal-poke hang about his neck,
Into a leathern whang,
Well fasten'd to a broad bucle,
That was both stark and 'strang?

* "As Robyn Hood in Barnesdale stood," is the fragment of a ballad that has baffled every research. An additional and earlier notice of it than those collected by Ritson, may be found in Nicolas Vdall's translation of the Apophthegms of Erasmus, first printed in 1542. "When Diogenes on a certain tyme treactyng and makyng a declaraction of an earnest and saige mater of philosophie, had not one hearer that would geue diligente care vnto hym, he begoonne to syng suche an other foolyshe song as Robyn Hood in Barnesdale stood, &c. and sembleed as though he would daunce withall."—W. Haslewood.

† Clouted, i. e. patched.

He had three hats upon his head,
Together sticked fast,
He car'd neither for wind nor wet,
In lands where'er he past.

Good Robin cast him in the way,
To see what he might be,
If any beggar had money,
He thought some part had he.

Tarry, tarry, good Robin says,
Tarry, and speak with me.
He heard him as he heard him not,
And fast on his way did hie.

'Tis be not so, says good Robin,
Nay, thou must tarry still.
By my troth, said the bold beggar,
Of that I have no will.

It is far to my lodging house,
And it is growing late,
If they have supt e'er I come in
I will look wondrous blate.*

Now, by my troth, says good Robin,
I see well by thy fare,
If thou cheer well to thy supper,
Of mine thou takes no care.

* i. e. silly.

Who wants my dinner all this day,
And wots not where to lie,
And would I to the tavern go,
I want money to buy.

Sir, you must lend me some money
Untill we meet again.
The beggar answer'd cankardly,
I have no money to lend.

Thou art as young a man as I,
And seems to be as sweer; *
If thou fast till thou get from me,
Thou shalt eat none this year.

Now, by my troth, says good Robin,
Since we are assembled so,
If thou hast but a small farthing,
I'll have it e'er thou go.

Come, lay down thy clouted cloak,
And do no longer stand,
And loose the strings of all thy pokes,
I'll ripe† them with my hand.

And now to thee I make a vow,
If thou make any din,
I shall see if a broad arrow,
Can pierce a beggar's skin.

* i. e. lazy. † i. e. search.

The beggar smil'd, and answer made,
Far better let me be;
Think not that I will be afraid,
For thy nip crooked tree;

Or that I fear thee any whit,
For thy curn nips* of sticks,†
I know no use for them so meet
As to be pudding pricks.‡

Here I defy thee to do me ill,
For all thy boisterous fair,
Thou's get nothing from me but ill,
Would'st thou seek evermair.

Good Robin bent his noble bow,
He was an angery man,
And in it set a broad arrow;
Lo! e'er 'twas drawn a span,

The beggar, with his noble tree,
Reach'd him so round a rout,
That his bow and his broad arrow
In flinders flew about.

Good Robin bound him to his brand,
But that prov'd likewise vain,
The beggar lighted on his hand
With his pike-staff again:

* Curn nips, i. e. parcel or number.

† He calls the arrows sticks, as he had before contemptuously called Robin Hood's bow a nip (or bit of a) crooked tree. ‡ Skewers to fasten a pudding bag.

I wot he might not draw a sword
For forty days and mair.
Good Robin could not speak a word,
His heart was ne'er so sair.

He could not fight, he could not flee,
He wist not what to do;
The beggar with his noble tree
Laid lusty slaps him to.

He paid good Robin back and side,
And baist him up and down,
And with his pike-staff laid on loud,
Till he fell in a swoon.

Stand up, man, the beggar said,
'Tis shame to go to rest;
Stay till thou get thy money told,
I think it were the best;

And syne* go to the tavern house,
And buy both wine and ale;
Hereat thy friends will crack full crouse,†
Thou hast been at the dale.

Good Robin answer'd ne'er a word,
But lay still as a stane;
His cheeks were pale as any clay,
And closed were his een.

* Syne, i. e. then.
† Crack full crouse, i. e. boast vauntingly.

The beggar thought him dead but fail,*
And boldly bound his way.
I would ye had been at the dale,
And gotten part of the play.

SECOND PART.

Now three of Robin's men, by chance,
Came walking by the way,
And found their master in a trance,
On ground where that he lay.

Up have they taken good Robin,
Making a piteous bear,†
Yet saw they no man there at whom
They might the matter spear.

They looked him all round about,
But wound on him saw nane,
Yet at his mouth came bocking out
The blood of a good vain.

Cold water they have gotten syne,
And cast into his face;
Then he began to lift his een,
And speak within short space.

* But fail, i. e. without fail or doubt. † Bear, i. e. moan.

Tell us, dear master, said his men,
How with you stands the case.
Good Robin sigh'd e'er he began
To tell of his disgrace.

"I have been watchman in this wood
Near hand this twenty year,
Yet I was never so hard bestead
As ye have found me here;

A beggar with a clouted clock,*
Of whom I fear'd no ill,
Hath with his pike-staff cla'd my back,
I fear 'twill ne'er be well.

See, where he goes o'er yon hill,
With hat upon his head;
If e'er ye lov'd your master well,
Go now revenge this deed;

And bring him back again to me
If it lie in your might,
That I may see, before I die,
Him punish'd in my sight:

And if you may not bring him back,
Let him not go loose on;
For to us all it were great shame
If he escape again."

* i, e. cloak.

"One of us shall with you remain,
Because you're ill at ease,
The other two shall bring him back,
To use him as you please."

Now, by my troth, says good Robin,
I true there's enough said;
An he get scouth* to wield his tree,
I fear you'll both be paid."

"Be not fear'd, our master,
That we two can be dung
With any bluter base beggar,
That has nought but a rung.†

His staff shall stand him in no stead,
That you shall shortly see,
But back again he shall be led,
And fast bound shall he be,
To see if ye will have him slain,
Or hanged on a tree."

"But cast you sliely in his way,
Before he be aware,
And on his pike-staff first hands lay,
Ye'll speed the better far."

* i. e. room. † i. e. staff.

Now leave we Robin with his man,
Again to play the child,
And learn himself to stand and gang
By halds, for all his eild.*

Now pass we to the bold beggar,
That raked o'er the hill,
Who never mended his pace more,
Than he had done no ill.

The young men knew the country well,
So soon where he would be,
And they have taken another way,
Was nearer by miles three,

They stoutly ran with all their might,
Spared neither dub nor mire,
They started at neither how † nor height,
No travel made them tire.

Till they before the beggar wan,
And cast them in his way;
A little wood lay in a glen,
And there they both did stay;

They stood up closely by a tree,
In each side of the gate,
Untill the beggar came them nigh,
That thought of no such late:‡

* i. e. age. † i. e. hollow. ‡ Late, i. e. play or encounter.

And as he was betwixt them past,
They leapt upon him baith;
The one his pike staff gripped fast,
They feared for its skaith.

The other he held in his sight
A drawen durk to his breast
And said, False carel,* quit thy staff,
Or I shall be thy priest.

His pike-staff they have ta'en him frae,
And stuck it in the green,
He was full loath to let it gae,
An better might it been.

The beggar was the feardest man
Of any that ere might be,
To win away no way he can,
Nor help him with his tree.

Nor wist he wherefore he was ta'en,
Nor how many was there;
He thought his life days had been gane,
He grew into dispair.

Grant me my life, the beggar said,
For him that dy'd on the tree,
And hold away that ugly knife,
Or else for fear I'll die.

* i. e. carl.

I griev'd you never in all my life,
Neither by late or air,*
You have great sin if you would slay
A silly poor beggar.

Thou lies, false lown, they said again,
For all that may be sworn;
Thou hast near slain the gentlest man
That ever yet was born;

And back again thou shalt be led,
And fast bound shalt thou be,
To see if he will have thee slain,
Or hanged on a tree.

The beggar then thought all was wrong,
They were set for his wrack,
He saw nothing appearing then,
But ill upon worse back.

Were he out of their hands, he thought,
And had again his tree,
He should not be led back for nought,
With such as he did see.

Then he bethought him on a wile,
If it could take effect,
How he might the young men beguile,
And give them a begeck.†

* i. e. early. * i. e. deceive them, or play them a trick.

Thus to do them shame for ill,
His beastly breast was bent,
He found the wind blew something shrill,
To further his intent.

He said, Brave gentlemen, be good,
And let a poor man be;
When ye have taken a beggar's blood,
It helps you not a flee.

It was but in mine own defence,
If he has gotten skaith;
But I will make a recompence
Is better for you baith.

If ye will set me fair and free,
And do me no more dear,
An hundred pounds I will you give,
And much more odd silvèr,

That I have gather'd this many years,
Under this clouted cloak,
And hid up wonder privately,
In bottom of my poke.

The young men to the council yeed,
And let the beggar gae;
They wist full well he had no speed
From them to run away.

They thought they would the money take,
Come after what so may;
And yet they would not take him back,
But in that place him slay.

By that good Robin would not know
That they had gotten coin,
It would content him [well] to show
That there they had him slain.

They said, false carel, soon have done,
And tell forth thy money,
For the ill turn that thou hast done
Its but a simple plee.

And yet we will not have thee back,
Come after what so may,
If thou wilt do that which thou spak,
And make us present pay.

O then he loosed his clouted clock,
And spread it on the ground,
And thereon lay he many a poke,
Betwixt them and the wind.

He took a great bag from his hals,
It was near full of meal,
Two pecks in it at least there was,
And more I wot full well.

Upon this cloak he set it down,
The mouth he opened wide,
To turn the same he made him bown,
The young man ready spy'd;

In every hand he took a nook,
Of that great leathern mail,
And with a fling the meal he shook
Into their face all hail.

Wherewith he blinded them so close,
A stime they could not see;
And then in heart he did rejoice,
And clap'd his lusty tree.

He thought if he had done them wrong,
In mealing of their cloaths,
For to strike off the meal again
With his pyke-staff he goes.

E'er any of them could red their een,
Or a glimmering might see,
Ilke one of them a dozen had,
Well laid on with his tree.

The young men were right swift of foot,
And boldly bound away,
The beggar could them no more hit
For all the haste he may.

What's all this haste? the beggar said,
May not you tarry still,
Untill your money be received?
I'll pay you with good will.

The shaking of my pokes, I fear,
Hath blown into your een;
But I have a good pyke-staff here
Can ripe them out out full clean.

The young men answered never a word,
They were dum as a stane;
In the thick wood the beggar fled
E'er they riped* their een:

And syne the night became so late,
To seek him was in vain:
But judge ye if they looked blate
When they cam home again.

Good Robin speer'd how they had sped,
They answer'd him, Full ill.
That can not be, good Robin says,
Ye have been at the mill.

The mill it is a meat rife part,†
They may lick what they please,
Most like ye have been at the art,
Who would look at your 'claiths.

* Riped, i. e. cleared.

† i. e. a place where food is always in plenty.

They hang'd their heads, they drooped down,
A word they could not speak,
Robin said, Because I fell a sound,
I think ye'll do the like.

Tell on the matter, less or more,
And tell me what and how
Ye have done with the bold beggàr
I sent you for right now.

And when they told him to an end,
As I have said before,
How that the beggar did them blind,
What mister* presses more:

And how he lin'd their shoulders broad
With his great trenchen tree;
And how in the thick woods he fled,
E'er they a stime† could see;

And how they scarcely could win home,
Their bones were baste so sore;
Good Robin cry'd, Fy! out! for shame!
We're sham'd for evermore.

Altho' good Robin would full fain
Of his wrong revenged be,
He smil'd to see his merry young men
Had gotten a taste of the tree.

* Mister, i. e. need.
† Stime, i. e. a glimmering of light.

XXXIII.

ROBIN HOOD TURNED BEGGAR.

COME and listen, you gentlemen all,
That mirth do love for to hear,
And a story true I'll tell to you,
If that you will but draw near.

In elder times when merriment was,
And archery was holden good,
There was an outlaw, as many do know,
Which men called Robin Hood.

Upon a time it chanced so,
Bold Robin was merry dispos'd,
His time for to spend he did intend,
Either with friends or foes.

Then he got up on a gallant brave steed,
The which was worth angels ten,
With a mantle of green, most brave to be seen
He left all his merry men.

And riding towards Nottingham,
Some pastime for to 'spy,
There was he aware of a jolly beggar
As e'er he beheld with his eye.

An old patch'd coat the beggar had on,
Which he daily did use for to wear;
And many a bag about him did wag,
Which made Robin Hood to him repair.

God speed, God speed, said Robin Hood then,
What countryman? tell unto me.
I am Yorkshire, Sir, but ere you go far,
Some charity give unto me.

Why what would'st thou have? said Robin Hood,
I pray thee tell unto me,
No lands nor livings, the beggar he said,
But a penny for charity.

I have no money, said Robin Hood then,
But a ranger within the wood;
I am an outlaw, as many do know,
My name is Robin Hood.

But yet I must tell thee, bonny beggar,
That a bout with thee I must try;
Thy coat of gray lay down, I say,
And my mantle of green shall lie by.

Content, content, the beggar he cried,
Thy part it will be the worse;
For I hope this bout to give thee the rout,
And then have at thy purse.

The beggar he had a mickle long staff,
And Robin a nut-brown sword;
The beggar drew nigh, and at Robin let fly,
But gave him never a word.

Fight on, fight on, said Robin Hood then,
This game well pleaseth me;
For every blow that Robin gave,
The beggar gave buffets three.

And fighting there full hardy and sore,
Not far from Nottingham town,
They never fled 'till from Robin Hood's head
The blood it ran trickling down.

O hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And thou and I will agree;
If that be true, the beggar he said,
Thy mantle come give unto me.

Now a change, a change, said Robin Hood,
Thy bags and coat give me;
And this mantle of mine I'll to thee resign,
My horse and my bravery.

When Robin had got the beggar's cloaths,
He looked round about;
Methinks, said he, I seem to be
A beggar brave and stout.

For now I have a bag for my bread,
So I have another for my corn:
I have one for salt, and another for malt,
And one for my little horn.

And now I will a begging go,
Some charity for to find;
And if any more of Robin you'll know,
In the second part 'tis behind.

SECOND PART.

Now Robin he is to Nottingham bound,
With his bag hanging down to his knee,
His staff and his coat scaree worth a groat,
Yet merrily passed he.

As Robin he passed the streets along,
He heard a pitiful cry;
Three brethren dear, as he did hear,
Condemned were to die.

Then Robin he hied to the sheriff's house,
Some relief for to seek:
He skipt and leap'd, and caper'd full high,
As he went along the street.

But when to the sheriff's house he came,
There a gentleman fine and brave,
Thou beggar, said he, come tell unto me
What is it thou would'st have.

No meat, nor drink, said Robin Hood then,
That I come here to crave;
But to get the lives of yeomen three,
And that I fain would have.

That cannot be, thou bold beggar,
Their fact it is so clear;
I tell to thee, they hang'd must be,
For stealing our king's deer.

But when to the gallows they did come,
There was many a weeping eye;
O hold your peace, said Robin Hood then,
For certain they shall not die.

Then Robin he set his horn to his mouth,
And he blew out blasts three,
Till a hundred bold archers brave
Came kneeling down to his knee.

What is your will, master? they said,
We are at your command,
Shoot east, shoot west, said Robin then,
And see you spare no man.

Then they shot east, and they shot west,
Their arrows were so keen;
The sheriff he, and his company
No longer could be seen.

Then he stept to those brethren three,
And away he has them ta'en;
The sheriff was crost, and many a man lost,
That dead lay on the plain.

And away they went into the merry green wood,
And sung with a merry glee;
And Robin took these brethren good
To be of his yeomandry.

XXXIV.

LITTLE JOHN AND THE FOUR BEGGARS.

All you that delight for to spend some time,
A merry song for to sing,
Unto me draw near, and you shall hear
How Little John went a begging.

As Robin Hood walked the forest along,
And all his yeomandree,
Says Robin, some of you a begging must go,
And, Little John, it must be thee.

Says John, if I must a begging go,
I will have a palmer's weed,
With a staff and coat, and bags of all sorts,
The better then shall I speed.

Come now, give me a bag for my bread,
And another for my cheese,
And one for a penny, if I get any,
That nothing I may leese.

Now Little John is a begging gone,
Seeking for some relief;
But of all the beggars he met on the way,
Little John he was the chief.

But as he was walking himself alone,
Four beggars he chanced to spy,
Some deaf, some blind, some came behind;
Says John, here's a brave company.

Good morrow, said John, my brethren dear,
Good fortune I had you to see;
Which way do you go? pray let me know,
For I want some company.

O, what is here to do? then said Little John:
Why ring all these bells? said he,
What dog is hanging? Come let us be ganging,
That we the truth may see.

Here is no dog hanging, then one of them said,
Good fellow, I tell unto thee; [bread,
But here is one dead, that will give us cheese and
And it may be one single penny.

We have brethren in London, another said,
So have we at Coventry,
In Berwick and Dover, and all the world over,
But ne'er a crook'd carl like thee.

Therefore stand thee back, thou crooked carl,
And take that knock on the crown:
Nay, says Little John, I'll not yet be gone,
For a bout I will have of you round.

Now have at you all, said Little John,
If you be so full of your blows;
Fight on all four, and ne'er give o'er,
Whether you be friends or foes.

John nipped the dumb, and made him to roar,
And the blind he made to see;
And he that a cripple had been for seven years,
He made run faster than he;

And flinging them all against the wall,
With many a sturdy bang,
It made John sing, to hear the gold ring,
And against the walls cry twang.

Then he got out of the beggar's cloak
Three hundred pounds in gold;
Good fortune had I, said Little John,
Such a good sight to behold.

But what found he in the beggar's bag
But three hundred pounds and three?
If I drink water while this doth last,
Then an ill death may I die!

And my begging trade I will now give o'er,
My fortune hath been so good:
Therefore I will not stay, but I will away
To the forest of merry Sherwood.

And when to the forest of Sherwood he came,
He quickly there did see
Bold Robin Hood, his master good,
And all his company.

What news? what news? said Robin Hood,
Come, Little John, tell unto me,
How hast thou sped with thy beggar's trade,
For that I fain would see?

No news, but good, said Little John,
With begging full well have I sped;
Three hundred and three I have here for thee,
In silver, and gold so red.

Then Robin Hood took Little John by the hand
And danced about the oak-tree:
If we drink water while this doth last,
Then an ill death may we die!

So to conclude my merry new song,
All you that delight to sing,
'Tis of Robin Hood, that archer good,
And how Little John went a begging.

XXXV.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE RANGER.

When Phœbus had melted the sickles of ice,
And likewise the mountains of snow,
Bold Robin Hood he would ramble away,
To frolick abroad with his bow.

He left all his merry men waiting behind,
Whilst through the green vallies he pass'd,
Where did he behold a forester bold,
Who cried out, friend, whither so fast?

I am going, quoth Robin, to kill a fat buck,
For me and my merry men all;
Besides, ere I go, I'll have a fat doe,
Or else it shall cost me a fall.

You'd best have a care, said the forester then,
For these are his majesty's deer;
Before you shall shoot, the thing I'll dispute,
For I am head forester here.

These thirteen long summers, said Robin, I'm sure,
My arrows I here have let fly,
Where freely I range; methinks it is strange
You should have more power than I.

This forest, quoth Robin, I think is my own,
And so are the nimble deer too;
Therefore I declare, and solemnly swear,
I'll not be affronted by you.

The forester he had a long quarter-staff,
Likewise a broad sword by his side;
Without more ado, he presently drew,
Declaring the truth should be tried.

Bold Robin Hood had a sword of the best:
Thus, ere he would take any wrong,
His courage was flush, he'd venture a brush,
And thus they went to it ding-dong.

The very first blow that the forester gave,
He made his broad weapon cry twang:
'Twas over the head, he fell down for dead;
O, that was a damnable bang!

But Robin he soon did recover himself,
And bravely fell to it again;
The very next stroke their weapons they broke,
Yet never a man there was slain.

At quarter-staff then they resolved to play,
Because they would have the other bout;
And brave Robin Hood right valiantly stood,
Unwilling he was to give out.

Bold Robin he gave him very hard blows,
The other return'd them as fast;
At every stroke their jackets did smoke;
Three hours the combat did last.

At length in a rage the forester grew,
And cudgell'd bold Robin so sore,
That he could not stand; so shaking his hand,
He said, let us freely give o'er:

Thou art a brave fellow; I needs must confess
I never knew any so good:
Thou art fitting to be a yeoman for me,
And range in the merry green wood.

I'll give thee this ring as a token of love,
For bravely thou hast acted thy part;
That man that can fight, in him I delight,
And love him with all my whole heart.

Then Robin Hood setting his horn to his mouth,
A blast he merrily blows;
His yeomen did hear, and straight did appear
A hundred with trusty long bows.

Now Little John came at the head of them all,
Cloath'd in a rich mantle of green;
And likewise the rest were gloriously drest,
A delicate sight to be seen!

Lo! these are my yeomen, said bold Robin Hood,
And thou shalt be one of the train:
A mantle and bow, and quiver also,
I give them whom I entertain.

The forester willingly enter'd the list,
They were such a beautiful sight.
Then with a long bow they shot a fat doe,
And made a rich supper that night.

What singing and dancing was in the green wood,
For joy of another new mate!
With might and delight they spent all the night,
And liv'd at a plentiful rate.

The forester ne'er was so merry before,
As then he was with these brave souls,
Who never would fail, in wine, beer, or ale,
To take off their cherishing bowls.

Then Robin Hood gave him a mantle of green,
Broad arrows, and a curious long bow:
This done, the next day, so gallant and gay,
He marched them all on a row.

Quoth he, my brave yeomen, be true to your trust,
And then we may range the woods wide;
They all did declare, and solemnly swear,
They'd conquer, or die by his side.

XXXVI.

ROBIN HOOD AND LITTLE JOHN.

When Robin Hood was about twenty years old,
He happened to meet Little John,
A jolly brisk blade, right fit for the trade,
For he was a lusty young man.

Tho' he was call'd little, his limbs they were large,
And his stature was seven foot high:
Where ever he came, they quak'd at his name,
For soon he would make them to fly.

How they came acquainted I'll tell you in brief,
If you would but listen awhile;
For this very jest, among all the rest,
I think, may cause you to smile.

For Robin Hood said to his jolly bowmen,
Pray tarry you here in this grove,
And see that you all observe well my call,
While thorough the forest I rove.

We have had no sport these fourteen long days,
Therefore now abroad will I go;
Now should I be beat, and cannot retreat,
My horn I will presently blow.

Then did he shake hands with his merry men all,
And bid them at present good-bye;
Then as near a brook his journey he took,
A stranger he chanc'd to espy

They happen'd to meet on a long narrow bridge,
And neither of them would give way;
Quoth bold Robin Hood, and sturdily stood,
I'll shew you right Nottingham play.

With that from his quiver an arrow he drew,
A broad arrow with a goose wing;
The stranger replied, I'll liquor thy hide,
If thou offer to touch the string.

Quoth bold Robin Hood, thou dost prate like an ass,
For, were I to bend but my bow,
I could send a dart quite through thy proud heart,
Before thou could'st strike me one blow.

Thou talk'st like a coward, the stranger replied,
Well arm'd with a long bow you stand,
To shoot at my breast, while I, I protest,
Have nought but a staff in my hand.

The name of a coward, quoth Robin, I scorn,
Therefore my long bow I'll lay by;
And now, for thy sake, a staff will I take,
The truth of thy manhood to try.

Then Robin Hood stept to a thicket of trees,
And chose him a staff of ground oak;
Now this being done, away he did run
To the stranger, and merrily spoke:

Lo! see my staff is lusty and tough:
Now, here on the bridge we will play;
Whoever falls in, the other shall win
The battle, and so we'll away.

With all my whole heart, the stranger replied,
I scorn in the least to give out.
This said, they fell to't without more dispute,
And their staffs they did flourish about.

At first Robin gave the stranger a bang,
So hard that he made his bones ring:
The stranger he said, this must be repaid,
I'll give you as good as you bring.

So long as I'm able to handle a staff,
To die in your debt, friend, I scorn:
Then to it each goes, and follow'd their blows,
As if they had been threshing of corn.

The stranger gave Robin a crack on the crown,
Which caused the blood to appear;
Then Robin enrag'd more fiercely engag'd,
And follow'd his blows more severe.

So thick and so fast did he lay it on him,
With a passionate fury and ire;
At every stroke he made him to smoke,
As if he had been all on fire.

O then in a fury the stranger he grew,
And gave him a damnable look;
And with a blow, which laid him full low,
And tumbled him into the brook,

I prithee, good fellow, O where art thou now?
The stranger, in laughter, he cried:
Quoth bold Robin Hood, Good faith, in the flood,
And floating along with the tide:

I needs must acknowledge thou art a brave soul,
With thee I'll no longer contend;
For needs must I say thou hast got the day,
Our battle shall be at an end.

Then unto the bank he did presently wade,
And pull'd him out by a thorn;
Which done, at the last he blew a loud blast
Straightway on his fine bugle horn:

The eeho of which thro' the vallies did fly,
At which his stout bowmen appear'd,
All cloathed in green, most gay to be seen;
So up to their master they steer'd.

O what is the matter? quoth Will. Stutely,
Good master, you are wet to the skin:
No matter, quoth he, the lad which you see,
In fighting hath tumbled me in.

He shall not go scot-free, the others replied;
So straight they were seizing him there,
To duck him likewise: but Robin Hood cries,
He is a stout fellow, forbear.

There's no one shall wrong thee, friend, be not afraid;
These bowmen upon me do wait:
There's threescore and nine; if thou will be mine,
Thou shalt have my livery straight,

And other accoutrements fit for a man:
Speak up, jolly blade, never fear;
I'll teach you also the use of the bow,
To shoot at the fat fallow deer.

O here is my hand, the stranger replied,
I'll serve you with all my whole heart:
My name is John Little, a man of good mettle;
Ne'er doubt me, for I'll play my part.

His name shall be alter'd, quoth Will. Stutely,
And I will his godfather be;
Prepare then a feast, and none of the least,
For we will be merry, quoth he.

They presently fetch'd him a brace of fat does,
With humming strong liquor likewise:
They lov'd what was good; so in the green wood
This pretty sweet babe they baptiz'd.

He was, I must tell you, but seven feet high,
And may be an ell in the waist;
A sweet pretty lad; much feasting they had,
Bold Robin the christening grac'd,

With all his bowmen, which stood in a ring,
And were of the Nottingham breed.
Brave Stutely came then with seven yeomen,
And did in this manner proceed:

This infant was called John Litttle, quoth he,
Which name shall be changed anon:
The words we'll transpose; so wherever he goes,
His name shall be call'd Little John.

They all with a shout made the elements ring,
So soon as the office was o'er;
To feasting they went, with true merriment,
And tippled strong liquor gillore.*

Then Robin he took the pretty sweet babe,
And cloath'd him from top to the toe
In garments of green most gay to be seen,
And gave him a curious long bow.

Thou shalt be an archer as well as the best,
And range in the green wood with us,
Where we'll not want gold nor silver, behold,
While bishops have ought in their purse.

We live here like squires or lords of renown,
Without e'er a foot of free land;
We feast on good cheer, with wine, ale, and beer,
And every thing at our command.

Then music and dancing did finish the day:
At length, when the sun waxed low,
Then all the whole train their grove did refrain,
And unto their caves they did go.

And so ever after, as long as they liv'd,
Although he was proper and tall,
Yet nevertheless, the truth to express,
Still Little John they did him call.

* Abundantly.

XXXVII.

The Bishop of Hereford's Entertainment by Robin Hood and Little John, &c. in merry Barnsdale.

SOME they will talk of bold Robin Hood,
And some of barons bold;
But I'll tell you how he serv'd the bishop of Hereford,
When he robb'd him of his gold.

As it befell in merry Barnsdale,
All under the green-wood tree,
The bishop of Hereford was to come by,
With all his company.

Come kill me a ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,
Come kill me a good fat deer;
The bishop of Hereford is to dine with me to-day,
And he shall pay well for his cheer.

We'll kill a fat ven'son, said bold Robin Hood,
And dress it by the highway side;
And we will watch the bishop narrowly,
Lest some other way he should ride.

Robin Hood dress'd himself in shepherd's attire,
With six of his men also;
And when the bishop of Hereford came by,
They about the fire did go.

O what is the matter? then said the bishop,
Or for whom do you make this ado?
Or why do you kill the king's ven'son,
When your company is so few?

We are shepherds, said bold Robin Hood,
And we keep sheep all the year;
And we are disposed to be merry this day,
And to kill of the king's fat deer.

You are brave fellows, said the bishop,
And the king of your doing shall know;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

O pardon, O pardon, said bold Robin Hood,
O pardon, I thee pray,
For it becomes not your lordship's coat
To take so many lives away.

No pardon, no pardon, said the bishop,
No pardon I thee owe;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For before the king you shall go.

Then Robin set his back against a tree,
And his foot against a thorn;
And from underneath his shepherd's coat
He pull'd out a bugle horn.

He put the little end to his mouth,
And a loud blast did he blow,
Till threescore and ten of bold Robin's men
Came running all on a row;

All making obeisance to bold Robin Hood,
'Twas a comely sight to see.
What is the matter, master, said Little John,
That you blow so hastily?

O here is the bishop of Hereford,
And no pardon we shall have.
Cut off his head, master, said Little John,
And throw him into his grave.

O pardon, O pardon, said the bishop,
O pardon, I thee pray;
For if I had known it had been you,
I'd have gone some other way.

No pardon, no pardon, said bold Robin Hood,
No pardon I thee owe;
Therefore make haste, and come along with me,
For to merry Barnsdale you shall go.

Then Robin he took the bishop by the hand,
And led him to merry Barnsdale;
He made him to stay and sup with him that night,
And to drink wine, beer, and ale.

Call in a reckoning, said the bishop,
For methinks it grows wond'rous high.
Lend me your purse, master, said Little John,
And I'll tell you bye and bye.

Then Little John took the bishop's cloak,
And spread it upon the ground,
And out of the bishop's portmanteau
He told three hundred pound.

Here's money enough, master, said Little John,
And a comely sight 'tis to see;
It makes me in charity with the bishop,
Tho' he heartily loveth not me.

Robin Hood took the bishop by the hand,
And he caused the music to play;
And he made the bishop to dance in his boots,
And glad he could so get away.

XXXVIII.

Robin Hood rescuing the Widow's Three Sons from the Sheriff, when going to be Executed.

THERE are twelve months in all the year,
As I hear many say,
But the merriest month in all the year
Is the merry month of May.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link, a down, and a day,
And there he met a silly old woman,
Was weeping on the way.

What news, what news? thou silly old woman,
What news hast thou for me?
Said she, There's three squires in Nottingham town
To day are condemn'd to die.

Oh, have they parishes burnt? he said,
Or have they ministers slain?
Or have they robbed any virgin?
Or with other men's wives have lain?

They have no parishes burnt, good sir,
Nor yet have ministers slain,
Nor yet have they robbed any virgin,
Nor with other men's wives have lain.

Oh, what have they done? said Robin Hood,
I pray thee tell to me.
It's for slaying of the king's fallow deer,
Bearing their long bows with thee.

Dost thou not mind, old woman, he said,
Since thou made me sup and dine?
By the truth of my body, quoth bold Robin Hood,
You could not tell it in better time.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link, a down, and a day,
And there he met with a silly old palmer,
Was walking along the highway.

What news, what news? thou silly old man,
What news, I do thee pray?
Said he, Three squires in Nottingham town,
Are condemn'd to die this day.

Come change thy apparel with me, old man,
Come change thy apparel for mine;
Here is forty shillings in good silver,
Go drink it in beer or wine!

Oh, thine apparel is good, he said,
And mine is ragged and torn;
Wherever you go, wherever you ride,
Laugh ne'er an old man to scorn.

Come change thy apparel with me, old churl,
Come change thy apparel with mine;
Here are twenty pieces of good broad gold,
Go feast thy brethren with wine.

Then he put on the old man's hat,
It stood full high on the crown;
The first bold bargain that I come at,
It shall make thee come down.

Then he put on the old man's cloak,
Was patch'd black, blew, and red;
He thought it no shame all the day long
To wear the bags of bread.

Then he put on the old man's breeks
Was patch'd from ballup* to side:
By the truth of my body, said bold Robin Hood,
This man loved little pride.

Then he put on the old man's hose,
Were patch'd from knee to wrist:
By the truth of my body, said bold Robin Hood,
I'd laugh if I had any list.

* i. e. the breeches-flap.

Then he put on the old man's shoes,
Were patch'd both beneath and aboon;
Then Robin Hood swore a solemn oath,
It's good habit that makes a man.

Now Robin Hood is to Nottingham gone,
With a link, a down, and a down,
And there he met with the proud sheriff,
Was walking along the town.

Oh Christ you save, oh sheriff, he said,
Oh Christ you save and see,
And what will you give to a silly old man
To day will your hangman be.

Some suits, some suits, the sheriff he said,
Some suits I'll give to thee;
Some suits, some suits, and pence thirteen,
To day's a hangman's fee.

Then Robin he turns him round about,
And jumps from stock to stone:
By the truth of my body, the sheriff he said,
That's well jumpt, thou nimble old man.

I was ne'er a hangman in all my life,
Nor yet intends to trade;
But curst be he, said bold Robin,
That first a hangman was made.

I've a bag for meal, and a bag for malt,
And a bag for barley and corn;
A bag for bread, and a bag for beef,
And a bag for my little small horn.

I have a horn in my pocket,
I got it from Robin Hood,
And still when I set it to my mouth,
For thee it blows little good.

Oh, wind thy horn, thou proud fellow,
Of thee I have no doubt;
I wish that thou give such a blast,
Till both thy eyes fall out.

The first loud blast that he did blow,
He blew both loud and shrill;
A hundred and fifty of Robin Hood's men
Came riding over the hill.

The next loud blast that he did give,
He blew both loud and amain.
And quickly sixty of Robin Hood's men
Came shining over the plain.

Oh, who are those, the sheriff he said,
Come tripping over the lee?
They're my attendants, brave Robin did say,
They'll pay a visit to thee.

They took the gallows from the slack,
They set it in the glen,
They hang'd the proud sheriff on that,
Released their own three men.

XXXIX.

ROBIN HOOD AND MAID MARIAN.

A BONNY fine maid of a noble degree,
Maid Marian call'd by name,
Did live in the north, of excellent worth,
For she was a gallant dame.

For favour and face, and beauty most rare,
Queen Helen she did excel,
For Marian then was prais'd of all men,
That did in the country dwell.

'Twas neither Rosamond, nor Jane shore,
Whose beauty was clear and bright,
That could surpass this country lass,
Beloved of lord and knight.

The earl of Huntingdon nobly born,
That came of noble blood,
To Marian went, with good intent,
By the name of Robin Hood.

With kisses sweet their red lips did meet,
For she and the earl did agree;
In every place they kindly embrace
With love and sweet unity.

But fortune bearing these lovers a spite,
That soon they were forced to part;
To the merry green wood then went Robin Hood
With a sad and sorrowful heart.

And Marian, poor soul, was troubled in mind,
For the absence of her friend,
With finger in eye she often did cry,
And his person did much commend.

Perplexed and vexed, and troubled in mind,
She drest herself like a page,
And ranged the wood to find Robin Hood,
The bravest of men in that age.

With quiver and bow, sword, buckler and all,
Thus armed was Marian bold,
Still wandering about to find Robin out,
Whose person was better than gold.

But Robin Hood he himself had disguis'd,
And Marian was strangely attir'd,
That they prov'd foes, and so fell to blows,
Whose valour bold Robin admir'd.

They drew-out their swords, and to cutting they went
At least for an hour or more,
That the blood ran apace from bold Robin's face,
And Marian was wounded sore.

O hold thy hand, hold thy hand, said Robin Hood,
And thou shalt be one of my string,
To range in the wood with bold Robin Hood,
And hear the sweet nightingale sing.

When Marian did hear the voice of her love,
Herself she did quickly discover,
And with kisses sweet she did him greet,
Like to a most royal lover.

When bold Robin Hood his Marian did see,
Good lord, what clipping was there!
With kind embraces and jobbing of faces,
Providing of gallant cheer.

For Little John took his bow in his hand,
And wandered in the wood,
To kill the deer and make good cheer,
For Marian and Robin Hood.

A stately banquet they had full soon,
All in a shaded bower,
Where venison sweet they had to eat,
And were merry that present hour.

Great flaggons of wine were set on the board,
And merrily they drank round
Their bowls of sack, to strengthen the back,
Whilst their knees did touch the ground.

First Robin Hood began a health
To Marian his only dear,
And his yeomen all both comely and tall,
Did quickly bring up the rear.

For in a brave veny they tost off the bowls,
Whilst thus they did remain,
And every cup that they drank up
They fill'd with speed again.

At last they ended their merriment,
And went to walk in the wood,
Where Little John and maid Marian
Attended on bold Robin Hood.

In solid content together they liv'd
With all their yeomen gay;
They liv'd by their hands without any lands,
And so they did many a day.

But now to conclude, an end I will make,
In time as I think it good,
For the people that dwell in the north can tell
Of Marian and bold Robin Hood.

XL.

THE KING'S DISGUISE, AND FRIENDSHIP WITH ROBIN HOOD.

King Richard hearing of the pranks
Of Robin Hood and his men,
He much admir'd, and more desir'd
To see both him and them.

Then with a dozen of his lords,
To Nottingham he rode:
When he came there, he made good cheer,
And took up his abode.

He having staid there some time,
But had no hopes to speed,
He and his lords with one accord,
All put on monks weeds.

From Fountain-abbey they did ride,
Down to Barnsdale;
Where Robin Hood prepared stood
All company to assail.

The king was higher than the rest;
And Robin thought he had
An abbot been whom he had seen,
To rob him he was glad.

He took the king's horse by the head:
Abbot, says he, abide;
I am bound to rue such knaves as you,
That live in pomp and pride.

But we are messengers from the king,
The king himself did say;
Near to this place, his royal grace
To speak with thee does stay.

God save the king, said Robin Hood,
And all that wish him well;
He that does deny his sovereignty,
I wish he was in hell.

Thyself thou cursest, said the king,
For thou a traitor art:
Nay, but that you are his messenger,
I swear you lie in heart;

For I never yet hurt any man
That honest is and true;
But those who give their minds to live
Upon other men's due.

I never hurt the husbandman,
That use to till the ground;
Nor spill their blood, that range the wood,
To follow hawk or hound.

My chiefest spite to clergy is,
Who in these days bear sway;
With friars and monks, with their fine sprunks,
I make my chiefest prey.

But I am very glad, says Robin Hood,
That I have met you here;
Come, before we end, you shall, my friend,
Taste of our green wood cheer.

The king he then did marvel much,
And so did all his men;
They thought with fear, what kind of cheer
Robin would provide for them.

Robin took the king's horse by the head,
And led him to the tent:
Thou would not be so us'd, quoth he,
But that my king thee sent:

Nay, more than that, quoth Robin Hood,
For good king Richard's sake,
If you had as much gold as ever I told,
I would not one penny take.

Then Robin set his horn to his mouth,
And a loud blast he did blow,
'Till an hundred and ten of Robin Hood's men
Came marching all of a row.

And when they came bold Robin before,
Each man did bend his knee
O, thought the king, 'tis a gallant thing,
And a seemly sight to see.

Within himself the king did say,
These men of Robin Hood's
More humble be, than mine to me;
So the court may learn of the woods.

So then they all to dinner went,
Upon a carpet green;
Black, yellow, red, finely mingled,
Most curious to be seen.

Venison and fowls were plenty there,
With fish out of the river:
King Richard swore, on sea or shore,
He never was feasted better

Then Robin takes a cann of ale :
Come let us now begin ;
And every man shall have a cann,
Here's a health unto the king.

The king himself drank to the king,
So round about it went ;
Two barrels of ale, both stout and stale,
To pledge that health was spent.

And after that a bowl of wine
In his hand took Robin Hood :
Until I die, I'll drink wine, said he,
While I live in the green wood.

Bend all your bows, said Robin Hood,
And with the grey goose wing
Such sport now show, as you would do
In the presence of the king.

They shewed such brave archery,
By cleaving stick and wands,
That the king did say, such men as they
Live not in many lands.

Well, Robin Hood, then says the king,
If I could thy pardon get,
To serve the king in every thing,
Would'st thou thy mind firm set?

Yes, with all my heart, bold Robin said:
So they flung off their hoods;
To serve the king in every thing,
They swore they would spend their blood.

For a clergyman was first my bane,
Which makes me hate them all;
But if you'll be so kind to me,
Love them again I shall.

I am the king, thy sovereign king,
That appears before you all,
When Robin saw that it was he,
Straight then he down did fall.

Stand up again, then said the king:
I'll thee thy pardon give:
Stand up, my friend, who can contend,
When I give leave to live?

So they are all gone to Nottingham,
All shouting as they came;
But when the people them did see,
They thought the king was slain.

And for that cause the outlaws were come,
To rule all as they list;
And for to shun, which way to run,
The people did not wist.

The ploughman left the plough in the fields,
The smith ran from his shop;
Old folks also, that scarce could go,
Over their sticks did hop.

The king soon did let them understand
He had been in the green wood,
And from that day for evermore
He'd forgiven Robin Hood.

Then when the people they did hear,
And when the truth was known;
They all did sing, God save the king,
Hang care, the town's our own!

What's that Robin Hood? then said the sheriff,
That varlet I do hate
Both me and mine he caused to dine,
And serv'd us all with one plate.

Ho, ho, said Robin Hood, I know what you mean;
Come take your gold again:
Be friends with me, and I with thee
And so with every man.

Now, master sheriff, you are paid;
And since you are beginner,
As well as you give me my due,
For you ne'er paid for that dinner.

But if that it should please the king,
So much your house to grace;
To sup with you for to speak true,
I know you ne'er was base.

The sheriff this could not gainsay,
For a trick was put upon him;
A supper was drest, the king was a guest,
But he thought 'twould have undone him.

They are all gone to London court,
Robin Hood with all his train;
He once was there a noble peer,
And now he's there again.

Many such pranks brave Robin play'd
While he liv'd in the green wood;
Now, my friend, attend, and hear an end
Of honest Robin Hood.

XL.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE GOLDEN ARROW.

When as the sheriff of Nottingham
Was come with mickle grief,
He talk'd no good of Robin Hood,
That strong and sturdy thief.

So unto London road he past,
His losses to unfold
To king Richard, who did regard
The tale that he had told.

Why, quoth the king, what shall I do?
Art thou no sheriff for me?
The law is in force, to take thy course
Of them that injure thee.

Go, get thee gone, and by thyself
Devise some tricking game,
For to enthral yon rebels all;
Go, take thy course with them.

So away the sheriff he return'd,
And by the way he thought,
Of th' words of the king, and how the thing
To pass might well be brought.

For within his mind he imagined,
That when such matches were,
Those outlaws stout, without all doubt,
Would be the bowmen there.

So an arrow with a golden head,
And shaft of silver white,
Who won the day should bear away
For his own proper right.

Tidings came to bold Robin Hood,
Under the green-wood tree;
Come prepare you then, my merry men,
We'll go yon sport to see.

With that stept forth a brave young man,
David of Doncaster:
Master, said he, be rul'd by me,
From the green wood we'll not stir.

To tell the truth, I'm well inform'd,
Yon match it is a wile;
The sheriff, I wiss, devises this,
Us archers to beguile.

Thou smells of a coward, said Robin Hood;
Thy words do not please me;
Come on't what will, I'll try my skill
At yon brave archery.

O then bespoke brave Little John:
Come let us thither gang;
Come listen to me how it shall be,
That we need not be ken'd.

Our mantles all of Lincoln green
Behind us we will leave;
We'll dress us all, so several,
They shall not us perceive:

One shall wear white, another red,
One yellow, another blue;
Thus in disguise, in the exercise
We'll gang, whate'er ensue.

Forth from the green wood they are gone,
With hearts all firm and stout,
Resolving with the sheriff's men
To have a hearty bout.

So themselves they mixed with the rest,
To prevent all suspicion;
For if they should together hold,
They thought it no discretion.

So the sheriff looked round about,
Amongst eight hundred men,
But could not see the sight that he
Had long suspected then.

Some said, if Robin Hood was here,
And all his men to boot,
Sure none of them could pass these men,
So bravely they do shoot.

Ay, quoth the sheriff, and scratch'd his head,
I thought he would have been here;
I thought he would; but tho' he's bold,
He durst not now appear.

O, that word griev'd Robin Hood to the heart;
He vexed in his blood:
Ere long, thought he, thou shalt well see
That here was Robin Hood.

Some cried blue jacket, another cried brown,
And a third cried brave yellow;
But the fourth man said, yon man in red
In this place has no fellow.

For that was Robin Hood himself,
For he was cloath'd in red;
At every shot the prize he got,
For he was both sure and dead.

So the arrow with the golden head,
And shaft of silver white,
Brave Robin Hood won, and bore with him
For his own proper right.

These outlaws there that very day,
To shun all kinds of doubt,
By three or four, no less nor more,
As they went in came out;

Until they all assembled were,
Under the green-wood shade,
Where they relate in pleasant sport
What brave pastime they made.

Says Robin Hood, all my care is
How that yon sheriff may
Know certainly that it was I
That bore his arrow away.

Says Little John, my counsel good
Did take effect before;
So therefore now, if you'll allow,
I will advise once more.

This I advise, said Little John,
That a letter shall be penn'd,
And when it is done, to Nottingham
You to the sheriff shall send.

That is well advised, said Robin Hood;
But how must it be sent?
Pugh! when you please, it's done with ease,
Master, be you content.

I'll stick it on my arrow's head,
And shoot it into the town;
The mark must show where it must go,
Whenever it lights down.

The project it was well perform'd;
The sheriff the letter had,
Which when he read, he scratch'd his head,
And rav'd like one that's mad.

So we'll leave him chafing in the grease,
Which will do him no good:
Now, my friends, attend, and hear the end
Of honest Robin Hood.

XLI.

ROBIN HOOD AND THE VALIANT KNIGHT.

When Robin Hood, and his merry men all,
Had reigned many years,
The king was then told that they had been bold
To his bishops and noble peers.

Therefore they called a council of state,
To know what was best to be done,
For to quell their pride, or else, they replied,
The land would be over-run.

Having consulted a whole summer's day,
At length it was agreed,
That one should be sent to try the event,
And fetch him away with speed.

Therefore a trusty and most worthy knight
The king was pleased to call,
Sir William by name: when to him he came,
He told him his pleasure all.

Go you from hence to bold Robin Hood,
And bid him, without more ado,
Surrender himself, or else the proud elf
Shall suffer with all his crew.

Take here an hundred bowmen brave,
All chosen men of might,
Of excellent art for to take thy part,
In glittering armour bright.

Then said the knight, my sovereign liege,
By me they shall be led;
I'll venture my blood against Robin Hood,
And bring him alive or dead.

One hundred men were chosen straight,
As proper as e'er men saw:
On mid-summer day they marched away,
To conquer that brave outlaw.

With long yew bows, and shining spears,
They marched with mickle pride,
And never delay'd, nor halted, nor stay'd
'Till they came to the green-wood side.

Said he to his archers, tarry here,
Your bows make ready all,
That if need should be, you may follow me,
And see you observe my call.

I'll go in person first, he cried,
With the letters of my good king,
Well sign'd and seal'd; and if he will yield,
We need not draw one string.

He wander'd about 'till at length he came
To the tent of Robin Hood:
The letter he shows, bold Robin arose,
And there on his guard he stood.

They'd have me surrender, quoth bold Robin Hood,
And lie at their mercy then?
But tell them from me, that never shall be,
While I have full seven score men.

Sir William the knight, both hardy and bold,
Did offer to seize him there,
Which William Locksley by fortune did see,
And bid him that trick to forbear.

Then Robin Hood set his horn to his mouth,
And blew a blast or twain;
And so did the knight, at which there in sight
The archers came all amain.

Sir William with care he drew up his men,
And plac'd them in battle array;
Bold Robin, we find, he was not behind;
Now this was a bloody fray:

The archers on both sides bent their bows,
And the clouds of arrows flew;
The very first flight that honour'd knight
Did there bid the world adieu.

Yet nevertheless their fight did last
From morning till almost noon;
Both parties were stout, and loth to give out:
This was on the last day of June.

At length they left off; one party they went
To London with right good will;
And Robin Hood he to the green-wood tree,
And there he was taken ill.

He sent for a monk, to let him blood,
Who took his life away:
Now this being done, his archers they run,
It was not time to stay.

Some got on board, and cross'd the seas,
To Flanders, France, and Spain,
And others to Rome, for fear of their doom,
But soon return'd again.

XLII.

ROBIN HOOD'S DEATH AND BURIAL.

When Robin Hood and Little John
Went o'er yon bank of broom,
Said Robin Hood to Little John,
We have shot for many a pound.

But I am not able to shoot one shot more,
My arrows will not flee;
But I have a cousin lives down below,
Please God, she will bleed me.

Now Robin is to fair Kirkley gone,
As fast as he can win,
But before he came there, as we do hear,
He was taken very ill.

And when that he came to fair Kirkley-hall,
He knocked all at the ring,
But none was so ready as his cousin herself
For to let bold Robin in.

Will you please to sit down, cousin Robin, she said,
And drink some beer with me?
No, I will neither eat nor drink
Till I am blooded by thee.

Well, I have a room, cousin Robin, she said,
Which you did never see,
And if you please to walk therein,
You blooded by me shall be.

She blooded him in the vein of the arm,
And lock'd him up in the room,
There did he bleed all the live-long day,
Untill the next day at noon.

He then bethought him of a casement door,
Thinking for to be gone,
He was so weak he could not leap,
Nor he could not get down.

He then bethought him of his bugle horn,
Which hung low down to his knee,
He set his horn unto his mouth,
And blew out weak blasts three,

Then Little John when hearing him,
As he sat under the tree,
I fear my master is near dead,
He blows so wearily.

Then Little John to fair Kirkley is gone
As fast as he can dree;
But when he came to Kirkley-hall,
He broke locks two or three.

Untill he came bold Robin to,
Then he fell on his knee;
A boon, a boon, cries Little John,
Master, I beg of thee.

What is that boon, quoth Robin Hood,
Little John, thou begs of me?
It is to burn fair Kirkley-hall,
And all their nunnery.

Now nay, now nay, quoth Robin Hood,
That boon I'll not grant thee;
I never hurt woman in all my life,
Nor man in woman's company.

I never hurt fair maid in all my time,
Nor at my end shall it be;
But give me my bent bow in my hand,
And a broad arrow I'll let flee;
And where this arrow is taken up,
There shall my grave digg'd be.

Lay me a green sod under my head,
And another at my feet;
And lay my bent bow by my side,
Which was my music sweet;
And make my grave of gravel and green,
Which is most right and meet.

Let me have length and breadth enough,
With a green sod under my head;
That they may say, when I am dead,
Here lies bold Robin Hood.

These words they readily promis'd him,
Which did bold Robin please;
And there they buried bold Robin Hood,
Near to the fair Kirkleys.

ROBIN HOOD'S EPITAPH.

Set on his Tomb by the Prioress of Birkslay Monastery, in Yorkshire.

ROBIN, Earl of Huntingdon,
Lies under this little stone;
No archer was like him so good;
His wildness nam'd him ROBIN HOOD.
Full thirteen years, and something more,
These northern parts he vexed sore.
Such outlaws as he and his men
May England never know again.

The series of ballads relating to Robin Hood is here brought to a conclusion. We have traced him from his birth to his funeral. No ballads have been more popular than those which relate to this celebrated outlaw; they are familiar to readers of all ages and every class of society. The observation of Drayton is strictly true, and deserves to be transcribed:

"In this our spacious isle I think there is not one
But he of Robin Hood hath heard and Little John;
And to the end of time the tales shall ne'er be done
Of Scarlet, George a Green, and Much the Miller's son,
Of Tuck the merry friar, which many a sermon made
In praise of Robin Hood, his outlaws, and their trade."

There is one peculiarity attached to the story: the hero is constantly engaged in single combat, and uniformly

beaten. Yet, like Don Quixote, he always retains our regard, and is not degraded in our esteem, even when beaten by a woman, as in the instance of his encounter with maid Marian.

It is almost superfluous to state that the legend is founded on historic truth. The hero was a bold outlaw, who subsisted himself and his followers by levying forced contributions on the wealthy traveller, in plain English by robbery; but he appears always to have respected the unfortunate, the needy, and the female sex. The clergy fell under his displeasure, and he entertained a rooted antipathy to ecclesiastics of every degree, which has only been surpassed by that of his recent biographer, Ritson.

XLIV.

A WARNING-PIECE TO ENGLAND, AGAINST PRIDE AND WICKEDNESS:

Being the fall of Queen Eleanor, Wife to Edward the First, King of England; who, for her pride, by God's Judgments, sunk into the ground at Charing-cross, and rose at Queenhithe.

It can scarcely be necessary to observe, that no one circumstance in the life of queen Eleanor affords the least ground for the charges brought against her memory in this ballad. Her character, by the testimony of every historian, appears to have been truly amiable; and what induced the writer to fix these groundless aspersions on her fame is difficult to account for, unless we admit the

conjectures of a former editor, which we shall give the reader in his own words.

"I look upon this song as a severe satyr, written in the "days of queen Mary the first. Nor is this barely a con- "jecture; for every circumstance which I have advanced "to prove that it could not be meant of queen Eleanor, "seems to confirm its relation to queen Mary. As, the "invention of coaches, which is recorded to have been in "her time; her jealousy of a woman who was brought "to bed; for queen Mary never had a child, notwith- "standing that it had been given out in all churches that "she was big, and publick prayers made for her safe de- "livery. Nor can it be thought absurd, that she should "be called a Spaniard; for she was daughter to Kathe- "rine, an infanta of Spain, and (after her coronation) "marryed to Philip, prince of Spain. I do not know "what particular fact is meant, by her usage of the "mayor of London's wife; but I am apt to think it spoken "of her cruelties in general: and her being swallowed "up, seems to be a threat of the poet's, that unless she "amended, vengeance would overtake her. A plan for "this satyr being thus formed, I am apt to think, our "poet looked back for a Spanish queen, that he might "the better disguise his satyr, and not lay himself so "open to censure, as he would otherwise have been: and "probably Eleanor was the first Spanish princess whose "name he met with. Probably he chose out this pious "queen that people might easily see, though it was said, "it could not be meant for her; and perhaps he was glad "to mention one so good and virtuous, that people might "look back upon her history, and see the difference be- "tween her and the bigotted queen, who then swayed "the English sceptre."

WHEN Edward was in England king,
The first of all that name,
Proud Ellinor he made his queen,
A stately Spanish dame:
Whose wicked life, and sinful pride,
Thro' England did excell:
To dainty dames, and gallant maids,
This queen was known full well.

She was the first that did invent
In coaches brave to ride;
She was the first that brought this land
To deadly sin of pride.
No English taylor here could serve
To make her rich attire;
But sent for taylors into Spain,
To feed her vain desire.

They brought in fashions strange and new,
With golden garments bright;
The farthingale, and mighty ruff,
With gowns of rich delight:
The London dames, in Spanish pride,
Did flourish every where;
Our English men, like women then,
Did wear long locks of hair.

Both man and child, both maid and wife,
Were drown'd in pride of Spain:
And thought the Spanish taylors then
Our English men did stain:
Whereat the queen did much despight,
To see our English men
In vestures clad, as brave to see,
As any Spaniard then.

She crav'd the king, that ev'ry man
That wore long locks of hair,
Might then be cut and polled all,
Or shaved very near.
Whereat the king did seem content,
And soon thereto agreed;
And first commanded, that his own
Should then be cut with speed;

And after that, to please his queen,
Proclaimed thro' the land,
That ev'ry man that wore long hair,
Should poll him out of hand.
But yet this Spaniard, not content,
To women bore a spite,
And then requested of the king,
Against all law and right,

That ev'ry womankind should have
Their right breast cut away;
And then with burning irons sear'd,
The blood to staunch and stay!
King Edward then perceiving well
Her spite to womankind,
Devised soon by policy,
To turn her bloody mind;

He sent for burning irons straight,
All sparkling hot to see;
And said, "O queen, come on thy way;
"I will begin with thee."
Which words did much displease the queen,
That penance to begin;
But ask'd him pardon on her knees;
Who gave her grace therein.

But afterwards she chanc'd to pass
Along brave London streets,
Whereas the mayor of London's wife
In stately sort she meets;
With music, mirth, and melody,
Unto the church they went,
To give God thanks, that to th' lord mayor
A noble son had sent.

It grieved much this spiteful queen,
To see that any one
Should so exceed in mirth and joy,
Except herself alone:
For which, she after did devise
Within her bloody mind,
And practis'd still more secretly
To kill this lady kind.

Unto the mayor of London then
She sent her letters straight,
To send his lady to the court,
Upon her grace to wait.
But when the London lady came
Before proud El'nor's face;
She stript her of her rich array,
And kept her vile and base.

She sent her into Wales with speed,
And kept her secret there;
And us'd her still more cruelly
Than ever man did hear.
She made her wash, she made her starch,
She made her drudge alway;
She made her nurse up children small,
And labour night and day.

But this contented not the queen,
  But shew'd her most despite;
She bound this lady to a post,
  At twelve a clock at night.
And as, poor lady, she stood bound,
  The queen (in angry mood)
Did set two snakes unto her breast,
  That suck'd away her blood.

Thus died the mayor of London's wife,
  Most grievous for to hear;
Which made the Spaniard grow more proud,
  As after shall appear.
The wheat that daily made her bread
  Was bolted twenty times;
The food that fed this stately dame,
  Was boil'd in costly wines.

The water that did spring from ground,
  She would not touch at all;
But wash'd her hands with the dew of heav'n,
  That on sweet roses fall.
She bath'd her body many a time
  In fountains fill'd with milk;
And ev'ry day did change attire,
  In costly Median silk.

But coming then to London back,
Within her coach of gold,
A tempest strange within the skies
This queen did there behold:
Out of which storm she could not go,
But there remain'd a space;
Four horses could not stir the coach
A foot out of the place.

A judgment lately sent from heav'n,
For shedding guiltless blood,
Upon this sinful queen, that slew
The London lady good!
King Edward then, as wisdom will'd,
Accus'd her of that deed;
But she denied, and wish'd that God
Would send his wrath with speed:

If that upon so vile a thing
Her heart did ever think,
She wish'd the ground might open wide,
And therein she might sink!
With that at Charing-cross she sunk
Into the ground alive;
And after rose with life again,
In London, at Queenhithe.

When, after that, she languish'd sore
Full twenty days in pain,
At last confess'd the lady's blood
Her guilty hand had slain :
And likewise, how that by a friar
She had a base-born child ;
Whose sinful lusts, and wickedness,
Her marriage bed defil'd.

Thus have you heard the fall of pride ;
A just reward of sin ;
For, those who will forswear themselves,
God's vengeance daily win.
Beware of pride, ye courtly dames,
Both wives and maidens all ;
Bear this imprinted on your mind,
That pride must have a fall.

XLV.

A Song of Queen Isabel, Wife to King Edward II. with the Downfall of the Spencers.

PROUD were the Spencers, and of condition ill :
All England, and the king likewise,
They ruled at their will :
And many lords and nobles of the land,
Through their occasions lost their lives,
And none did them withstand :

And at the last they did increase much grief
Between the king and Isabel,
His queen and faithful wife :
So that her life she dreaded wondrous sore,
And cast within her secret thoughts
Some present help therefore.

Then she requests with count'nance grave and sage,
That she to Thomas Becket's tomb
Might go in pilgrimage.
Then being joyful to have the happy chance;
Her son and she took ships with speed,
And sailed into France :

And royally she was received then
By the king and all the rest
Of peers and noblemen :
And unto him at last she did express
The cause of her arrival there,
Her care and heaviness.

When as her brother her grief did understand,
He gave her leave to gather men
Throughout his famous land ;
And made a promise to aid her evermore,
As oft as she should stand in need
Of gold and silver store :

But when indeed she did require the same,
He was as far from doing it,
As when she thither came ;
And did proclaim, whilst matters were so,
That none on pain of death should go
To aid the English queen.

This alteration did greatly grieve the queen,
That down along her comely face
The bitter tears were seen :
When she perceiv'd her friends forsook her so,
She knew not, for her safety,
Which way to turn or go :

But through good hap, at last she then decreed,
To seek in fruitful Germany
Some succour to this need:
And to Sir John Hainault then went she,
Who entertain'd this woful queen
With great solemnity.

And with great sorrow to him she then complain'd
Of all her griefs and injuries,
Which she of late sustain'd:
So that with weeping she dim'd her princely sight;
The cause whereof did greatly grieve
That noble courteous knight;

Who made an oath he would her champion be,
And in her quarrel spend his blood,
From wrong to set her free:
And all my friends with whom I may prevail,
Shall help to advance your state,
Whose truth no time shall fail.

And in his promise most faithful he was found,
And many lords of great account
Were in his voyage bound.
So setting forward with a goodly train,
At length through God's especial grace,
Into England they came:

At Harwich then, when they were ashore,
Of English lords and barons bold,
There came to her great store:
Which did rejoice the queen's afflicted heart,
That English lords in such sort
Came for to take her part.

When as king Edward thereof did understand,
How that the queen with such a power
Was enter'd on his land;
And how his nobles were gone to take her part;
He fled from London presently,
Even with a heavy heart.

And with the Spencers unto Bristol did go,
To fortify that gallant town,
Great cost he did bestow;
Leaving behind, to govern London town,
The stout bishop of Exeter,
Whose pride was soon pull'd down.

The mayor of London, with citizens great store,
The bishop and the Spencers both
In heart they did abhor;
Therefore they took him without fear or dread,
And at the standard in Cheapside
They soon smote off his head.

Unto the queen this message then they sent,
The city of London was
At her commandement:
Wherefore the queen, with all her company,
Did strait to Bristol march amain,
Wherein the king did lie:

Then she besieg'd the city round about,
Threatning sharp and cruel death
To those that were so stout; [wives,
Wherefore the townsmen, their children and their
Did yield the city to the queen
For safeguard of their lives:

Where was took, the story plain doth tell,
Sir Hugh Spencer, and with him
The earl of Arundel.
This judgment just the nobles did set down,
They should be drawn and hanged both,
In sight of Bristol town.

Then was king Edward in the castle there,
And Hugh Spencer still with him,
In dread and deadly fear;
And being prepar'd from thence to sail away,
The winds were found contrary,
They were enforc'd to stay:

But at last Sir John Beaumont, knight,
Did bring his sailing ship to shore,
And so did stay their flight:
And so these men were taken speedily,
And brought as prisoners to the queen,
Which did in Bristol lie.

The queen, by counsel of the lords and barons bold,
To Berkley sent the king,
There to be kept in hold:
And young Hugh Spencer, that did much ill procure,
Was to the marshal of the host
Sent unto keeping sure.

And then the queen to Hereford took her way,
With all her warlike company,
Which late in Bristol lay:
And here behold how Spencer was
From town to town, even as the queen
To Hereford did pass;

Upon a jade, which they by chance had found,
Young Spencer mounted was,
With legs and hands fast bound:
A writing-paper, along as he did go,
Upon his head he had to wear,
Which did his treason show:

And to deride this traitor lewd and ill,
Certain men with reeden-pipes
Did blow before him still.
Thus was he led along in every place,
While many people did rejoice
To see his strange disgrace.

When unto Hereford our noble queen was come,
She did assemble all the lords
And knights, both all and some;
And in their presence young Spencer judgment had,
To be both hang'd and quartered,
His treasons were so bad.

Then was the king deposed of his crown;
From rule and princely dignity
The lords did cast him down:
And in his life, his son both wise and sage,
Was crowned king of fair England,
At fifteen years of age.

XLV.

King Edward the Second, being sent prisoner to Berkley-castle by queen Isabel his wife, was deposed by his nobles, and his son Edward made king in his stead; the queen causing letters to be written to make him away.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

WHEN Isabella, fair England's queen,
In woful wars victorious had been,
Our comely king, her husband dear,
Subdu'd by strength, as did appear,
By her was sent to prison strong,
For having done his country wrong.
In Berkley castle cast was he,
Depriv'd of royal dignity:
Where he was kept in woful wise,
His queen did him so much despise.
There did he live in woful state,
Such is women's deadly hate,
When fickle fancy follows change,
And lustful thoughts begin to range.
Lord Mortimer was so in mind,
The sweet king's love was left behind

And none was known a greater foe
Unto king Edward in his woe,
Then Isabel his crowned queen,
As by the sequel shall be seen.
While he in prison poorly lay,
A parliament was held straightway ;
What time apace his foes did bring
Bills of complaint against the king :
So that the nobles of the land,
When they the matter thoroughly scann'd,
Pronounced then these speeches plain,
He was not worthy for to reign :
Therefore they made a flat decree,
He should forthwith deposed be ;
And his son Edward, young of years,
Was judged by his noble peers
Most meet to wear the princely crown,
His father being thus pull'd down.
Which word then when the queen did hear,
(Dissemblingly as did appear)
She wept, she wail'd, and wrung her hands,
Before the lords whereas she stands ;
Which when the prince her son did see,
He spake these words most courteously :
My sweet queen mother, weep not so,
Think not your son will seek your woe ;
Though English lords chuse me their king,
My own dear father yet living,

Think not therefore I will consent,
Except my father be content,
And with good will his crown resign,
And grant it freely to be mine:
Therefore, queen mother, think no ill
In me or them for their good will.
Then divers lords, without delay,
Went to the king, where as he lay,
Declaring how the matter stood,
And how the peers did think it good
To chuse his son their king to be,
If that he would thereto agree,
For to resign the princely crown,
And all the titles of renown:
If otherwise, they told him plain,
A stranger should the same attain.
These doleful tidings most unkind
Did sore afflict king Edward's mind:
But when he saw no remedy,
He did unto their wills agree;
And bitterly he did lament,
Saying, the Lord that plague had sent
For his offence and vanity,
Which he would suffer patiently,
Beseeching all the lords at last,
For to forgive all that was past.
When thus he was deposed quite
Of that which was his lawful right,

In prison was he kept full close
Without all pity or remorse;
And those that shewed him favour still
Were taken from him with ill will;
Which when the earl of Kent did hear,
Who was in blood to him full near,
He did intreat most earnestly
For his release and liberty.
His words did much the queen displease,
Who said he liv'd too much at ease;
Unto the bishop she did go,
Of Hereford, his deadly foe,
And cruel letters made him write
Unto his keepers with despite:
You are too kind to him (quoth she)
Henceforth more stricter look you be.
And in their writing subtilly
They sent them word that he should die:
The lord Matrevers all dismaid,
Unto Sir Thomas Gurney said:
The queen is much displeas'd (quoth he)
For Edward's too much liberty,
And by her letters doth bewray
That soon he shall be made away.
'Tis best (Sir Thomas then replied)
The queen's will should not be denied;
Whereby we shall have her good will,
And keep ourselves in credit still.

XLVI.

On the lamentable and cruel Murther of king Edward the Second; who, being in prison, had poison mingled with his meat, and escaped that with other wicked practices; and afterwards was lamentably murthered in his bed with a hot burning spit.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

THE king's curst keepers aiming at reward,
Hoping for favour of the furious queen,
On wretched Edward had they no regard;
Far from their hearts was mercy moved clean;
Wherefore they mingled poison with his meat,
Which made the man most fearful for to eat:

For, by the taste, he oftentimes suspected
The venom couched in a dainty dish;
That his fair body was full sore infected,
So ill they spiced both his flesh and fish:
But his strong nature all their craft beguiles,
The poison breaking forth in blains and biles.

An ugly scab o'er-spreads his lily skin,
Foul blotches break upon his manly face;
Thus sore without, and sorrowful within,
The despis'd man doth live in woful case:
Like to a lazar did he then abide,
That shews his sores along the high-way side.

But when this prov'd not to their mind,
And that they saw he liv'd in their despight,
Another damn'd device then did they find,
By stinking savours for to choak him quite;
In an odd corner did they lock him fast,
Hard by the which the carrion they did cast.

The stench thereof might be compared nigh
To that foul lake where cursed Sodom stood,
That poison'd birds that over it did fly,
Even by the savours of that filthy mud:
Then so the stink of that corrupted den
Was able for to choak ten thousand men.

But all in vain, it would not do (God wot)
His good complexion still drove out the same,
Like to the boiling of a seething pot,
That casts the scum into the fiery flame:
Thus still he liv'd, and living thus they sought
His death, whose downfall was already wrought.

Loathing his life, at length his keepers came
Into his chamber in the dead of night,
And without noise they entered soon the same,
With weapons drawn and torches burning bright,
Where the poor prisoner, fast asleep in bed,
Lay on his belly, nothing under's head.

The which advantage when the murderers saw,
A heavy table on him they did throw;
Wherewith awak'd, his breath he scarce could draw,
The weight whereof kept him under so:
Then turning up the clothes above his hips,
To hold his legs a couple quickly skips.

Then came the murderers, who a horn had got,
Which far into his fundament they thrust;
Another with a spit red burning hot,
Quite through the horn then he strongly pusht,
Among his intrails in most cruel wise,
Forcing thereby most lamentable cries:

And while within his body they did keep
The burning spit, still rolling up and down,
Most mournfully the murdered man did weep,
Whose doleful noise wak'd many in the town;
Who, guessing by his cries his death drew near,
Took great compassion on this noble peer.

And at each bitter shriek which he did make,
They pray'd to God for to receive his soul:
His ghastly groans inforc'd their hearts to ake,
Yet none durst go to cause the bell to toll.
Ah me! wo me! alack, alack, he cried;
And long it was before the time he died.

Strong was his heart, and long it was, God knows,
Ere he could stoop unto the stroke of death;
First was it wounded with a thousand woes,
Before he did resign his vital breath.
And being murdered thus, as you did hear,
No outward hurt upon him did appear.

This cruel murder being brought to pass,
The lord Matrevers to the court did hie,
To shew the queen her will performed was;
Great recompence he thought to get thereby:
But when the queen the sequel understands,
Dissembling she weeps, and wrings her hands.

Accursed traitor! hast thou slain (quoth she)
My noble wedded lord in such a sort?
Shame and confusion ever light on thee:
Oh how I grieve to hear this vile report!
Peace, cursed villain, from my sight, she said,
That hast of me a woful widow made.

Then all abash'd, Matrevers goes his way,
The saddest man that ever life did bear;
And to Sir Thomas Gurney did bewray
What bitter speech the queen did give him there.
Then did the queen outlaw them both together,
And banish'd them fair England's bounds for ever.

Thus the dissembling queen did seek to hide
The heinous act by her own means effected:
The knowledge of the deed she still denied,
That she of murder might not be suspected;
But yet for all the subtlety she wrought,
The truth unto the world was after brought.

XLVII.

The doleful Lamentation of the lord Matrevers and Sir Tho. Gurney, being banished the realm; and after three years banishment, Sir Tho. Gurney coming towards England to his lady and children, was beheaded on the sea.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

Alas! that ever this day we did see,
That false smiling fortune so fickle should be;
Our miseries are many, our woes without end,
To purchase us favour we both did offend.

Our deeds have deserved both sorrow and shame,
But wo worth the persons procured the same.
Alack and alack, with grief we may cry;
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

The bishop of Hereford ill may he fare,
He wrote us a letter full cunning and rare;
To kill princely Edward fear not, it is good;
Thus much by the letter we then understood:

But curst be the time we took it in hand,
To follow such counsel and wicked command:
Alack and alack, with grief we may cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

Forgive us, sweet Saviour, that damnable deed,
Which causeth with sorrow our hearts for to bleed,
And taking compassion upon our distress,
Put far from thy presence our great wickedness:

With tears all bedewed for mercy we cry,
And do not thy penitent mercy deny.
Alack and alack, with grief we may say,
That ever we made king Edward away:

For this we have lost our goods and our land,
Our castles and towers so stately do stand,
Our ladies and babies are turn'd out of door,
Like comfortless captives both naked and poor:

Both friendless and fatherless do they complain,
For gone are their comforts that should them maintain.
Alack and alack, and alas, may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

And while we go wringing our hands up and down,
In seeking for succour from town unto town,
All wrapped in wretchedness do we remain,
Tormented, perplexed with dolour and pain.

Despised, disdained, and banished quite
The coast of our country so sweet in our sight,
Alack and alack, and alas, may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

Then farewell, fair England, wherein we were born:
Our friends and our kindred do hold us in scorn;
Our honours and dignities quite have we lost,
Both profit and pleasure our fortune hath crost;

Our parks and our chases, our mansions so fair,
Our gems and our jewels most precious and rare.
Alack and alack, and alas may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

Then farewell, dear ladies, and most loving wives,
Might our miseries end with loss of our lives;
Then our silly children, that beg at your hand,
In grief and calamities long should not stand;

For yet in their country despised should be,
That lately were honoured of every degree.
Alack and alack, with grief may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

In countries unknown we range to and fro,
Cloying men's ears with reports of our woe;
Our food wild berries, green banks are our beds,
The trees serve for our houses to cover our heads:

Brown bread to our taste is most dainty and sweet,
Our drink is cold water took up at our feet.
Alack and alack, with grief we may cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

Thus having long wandred in hunger and cold,
Despising life's safety, most desperate bold,
Sir Thomas Gurney towards England doth go,
For love of his lady distressed with woe.

Saying, How happy and blessed were I,
To see my sweet children and wife ere I die!
Alack and alack, with grief may we cry,
That ever we made king Edward to die.

But three years after this woful exile,
Behold how false fortune his thoughts did beguile,
Coming towards England, was took by the way:
And lest he should the chief murderers betray,

Commandment was sent by one called Lea,
He should be beheaded forthwith on the sea.
Alack and alack, and alas, may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

Thus was Sir Thomas dispatched of life,
In coming to visit his sorrowful wife;
Who was cut off from his wished desire,
Which he in his heart so much did require,

And never again his lady did he see,
Nor his poor children in their misery.
Alack and alack, and alas, may we cry,
That ever we forced king Edward to die.

The lord Matrevers (the story doth tell)
In Germany after long time did he dwell,
In secret manner, for fear to be seen
By any person that favour'd the queen:

And there at last in great misery,
He ended his life most penitently.
Alack and alack, and alas, did he cry,
That ever he forced king Edward to die.

XLVIII.

"How Edward the King come in Braband,
And toke homage of all the land."

(By Laurence Minot.)

EDWARD our comely king,
In Brabant has his woning,*
With many comely knight;
And in that land truly to tell
Ordains he still for to dwell
To time he thinks to fight.

Now God that is of mightes most,
Grant him grace of the Holy Ghost,
His heritage to win;
And Mary mother of mercy free,
Save our king and his menze †
From sorrow, shame, and sin.

* Residence. † Retinue

Thus in Brabrant has he been
Where he before was seldom seen,
For to prove their japes,*
Now no longer will he spare,
But unto France fast will he fare
To comfort him with grapes.

Forth he ferd† into France,
God save him from mischance,
And all his company!
The noble Duke of Brabant
With him went into that land,
Ready to live or die.

Then the rich flower de lice
Wan there full little prise
Fast he fled for ferde;
The right heir of that country
Is comen with all his knights free,
To shake him by the beard.

Sir Philip the Valayse
With his men in those days,
To battle had he thought;
He bad his men them purvey
Withouten longer delay,
But he held it nought.

* Artifices. † Fared.

He brought folk full great wone *
Ay seven ogains † one,
That full wapind ‡ were ;
But soon when he heard ascry §
That king Edward was near thereby
Then durst he not come near.

In that morning fell a mist,
And when our Englishmen it wist,
It changed all their cheer :
Our king unto God made his boon,‖
And God sent him good comfort soon,
The weather wex ¶ full clear.

Our king and his men held the field
Stalworthly ** with spear and shield,
And thought to win his right,
With lordes and with knightes keen,
And other doughty men bydene ††
That were full frek ‡‡ to fight.

When Sir Philip of France heard tell,
That king Edward in field would dwell,
Then gained him no glee ;
He trusted of no better boot,
But both on horse and on foot
He hasted him to flee.

* Number. † Against. ‡ Weaponed or armed.
§ Reported. ‖ Prayer. ¶ Waxed.
** Valiantly. †† Besides. ‡‡ Eager.

It seemed he was ferd * for strokes
When he did fell his great oaks
About his pavilion,
Abated was then all his pride,
For longer there durst he not bide,
His boast was brought all down.

The king of Beme† had cares cold,
That was full hardy and bold,
A steed to umstride.‡
He and the king of Naverne §
Were fair ferd in the fern
Their heviddes ‖ for to hide.

And leves ¶ well it is no lie
The field hat ** Flemangrye
That king Edward was in,
With princes that was stiff and bold,
And dukes that were doughty told
In battle to begin.

The princes that were rich on row
Great nakers †† strike and trumpets blow,
And made mirth at their might;
Both alblast,‡‡ and many a bow,
Were ready rail'd upon a row
And full frek for to fight.

* Afraid, † Bohemia, ‡ Bestride.
§ Navarre. ‖ Heads. ¶ Believe.
** Was called. †† Tymbals. ‡‡ Cross-bow.

Gladly they gave meat and drink,
So that they should the better swink *
The wight † men that there were.
Sir Philip of France fled for doubt,
And hied him home with all his rout:
Coward, God give him care!

For there then had the lily ‡ flower
Lorn all halely § his honour
That so gat fled for ferd;
But our king Edward come full still
When that he trowed no harm him till,
And keeped him in the beard.

* Strive. † Valiant. ‡ Flower de luce.
§ All halely, i. e. wholly.

XLIX.

Of King Edward the Third and the fair Countess of Salisbury, setting forth her constancy and endless glory.

In Capell's prolusions, or select pieces of ancient poetry, is printed a dramatic performance, the subject of which is the amour between king Edward and the countess of Salisbury.

WHEN as Edward the third did live,
That valiant king,
David of Scotland to rebel
Did then begin:
The town of Berwick suddenly
From us he won,
And burnt Newcastle to the ground;
Thus strife began:
To Roxbury castle march'd he then,
And by the force of warlike men,
Besieg'd therein a gallant fair lady,
While that her husband was in France,
His country's honour to advance,
The noble and famous earl of Salisbury.

Brave sir William Montague
Rode then in haste;
Who declared unto the king,
The Scottish men's boast:
Who, like a lion in his rage,
Did straightway prepare
For to deliver that fair lady,
From woful care:
But when the Scottish men did hear say,
Edward our king was come that day,
They rais'd their siege, and ran away with fear.
So when that he did thither come,
With warlike trumpet, fife, and drum,
None but a gallant lady met he there,

Whom when he did with greedy eyes
Behold and see,
Her peerless beauty did enthrall
His majesty:
And ever the longer that he look'd,
The more he might;
For in her only beauty was
His heart's delight.
And humbly then upon her knee
She thank'd his royal majesty,
That he had driven danger from her gate,
Lady, quoth he, stand up in peace,
Altho' my war doth now increase.
Lord keep (quoth she) all hurt from your state.

Now is the king full sad in soul,
And wots not why;
And for the love of the fair countess
Of Salisbury.
She little knowing his cause of grief,
Did come to see
Wherefore his highness sate alone
So heavily:
I have been wrong'd, fair dame, quoth he,
Since I came hither unto thee.
No, God forbid, my sovereign, said she;
If I were worthy for to know
The cause and ground of this your woe,
You should be help'd, if it did lie in me.

Swear to perform thy word to me,
Thou lady gay;
To thee the sorrows of my heart
I will betray.
I swear by all the saints in heaven
I will, quoth she;
And let my lord have no mistrust
At all in me.
Then take thyself aside, he said;
For why, thy beauty hath betray'd;
Wounded a king with thy bright shining eye:
If thou do then some mercy show,
Thou shalt expel a princely woe:
So shall I live; or else in sorrow die.

You have your wish, my sovereign lord,
Effectually;
Take all the leave that I can give
Your majesty.
But on thy beauty all my joys
Have their abode.
Take thou my beauty from my face,
My gracious lord.
Did'st thou not swear to grant my will?
That I may, I will fulfill.
All then for my love, let my true love be seen.
My lord, your speech I might reprove:
You cannot give to me your love,
For that belongs unto your queen.

But I suppose your grace did this
Only to try,
Whether a wanton tale might tempt
Dame Salisbury.
Not from yourself therefore, my liege,
My steps do stray;
But from your wanton tempting tale
I go my way.
O turn again, my lady bright!
Come unto me, my heart's delight!
Gone is the comfort of my pensive heart;
Here comes the earl of Warwick, he
The father of this fair lady;
My mind to him I mean for to impart.

Why is my lord and sovereign king
So griev'd in mind?
Because that I have lost the thing
I cannot find.
What thing is that, my gracious lord,
Which you have lost?
It is my heart, which is near dead
Betwixt fire and frost.
Curs'd be that fire and frost too,
That caused this your highness' woe.
O Warwick! thou dost wrong me very sore;
It is thy daughter, noble earl,
That heav'n-bright lamp! that peerless pearl!
Which kills my heart; yet do I her adore,

If that be all (my gracious king)
That works your grief;
I will persuade the scornful dame
To yield relief:
Never shall she my daughter be,
If she refuse,
The love and favour of a king
May her excuse.
Thus wise Warwick went away,
And quite contrary he did say,
When as he did the beauteous countess meet;
Well met, my daughter, (then quoth he)
A message I must do to thee;
Our royal king most kindly doth thee greet.

The king will die, 'less thou to him
Do grant thy love.
To love the king, my husband's love
I must remove.
It is right charity to love,
My daughter dear;
But no true love charitable
For to appear.
His greatness may bear out the shame,
But his kingdom cannot buy out the blame:
He craves thy love, that may bereave thy life.
It is my duty to move this,
But not thy honesty to yield, I wis.
I mean to die a true unspotted wife.

Now hast thou spoken, my daughter dear,
As I would have:
Chastity bears a golden name
Unto the grave:
And when to thy wedded lord
Thou provest untrue,
Then let my bitter curses still
Thy soul pursue:
Then with a smiling chear go thou,
As right and reason doth allow:
Yet shew the king thou bear'st no strumpet's mind.
I go, dear father, in a trice;
And by a slight of fine device,
I'll cause the king to confess I'm not unkind.

Here comes the lady of my life,
The king did say.
My father bids me, sovereign lord,
Your will obey;
And I consent, if you will grant
One boon to me.
I grant it thee, my lady fair,
Whate'er it be.
My husband is alive, you know,
First let me kill him ere I go;
And at your command I will ever be.
Thy husband now in France doth rest.
No, no, he lies within my breast;
And being so nigh, he will my falsehood see.

With that she started from the king,
And took her knife,
And desperately she thought to rid
Herself of life.
The king he started from his chair,
Her hand to stay.
O noble king, you have broke your word
With me this day.
Thou shalt not do this deed, quoth he,
Then never will I lie with thee.
No; then live still, and let me bear the blame;
Live in honour and high estate,
With thy true lord, and wedded mate;
I never will attempt this suit again.

L.

The Winning of the Isle of Man, by the noble Earl of Salisbury.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

THE noble earl of Salisbury
With many a hardy knight,
Most valiantly prepar'd himself
Against the Scots to fight.
With his spear and his shield
Making his proud foes to yield,
Fiercely on them all he ran,
To drive them from the Isle of Man,
Drums striking on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

Their silken ensigns in the field
Most gloriously were spread,
The horse-men on their prancing steeds,
Struck many Scotchmen dead;
The brown bill on their corslets ring,
The bow-men with their gray-goose wing,

The lusty lance, the piercing spear,
The soft flesh of their foes do tear;
Drums beating on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

The battle was so fierce and hot,
The Scots for fear did fly,
And many a famous knight and 'squire
In gory blood did lie.
Some, thinking for to 'scape away,
Did drown themselves within the sea;
Some, with many a bloody wound,
Lay gasping on the clayey ground:
Drums beating on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

Thus after many a brave exploit,
That day perform'd and done,
The noble earl of Salisbury
The Isle of man had won:
Returning then most gallantly
With honour, fame, and victory,
Like a conqueror of fame,
To court this warlike champion came:
Drums beating in a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

Our king, rejoicing at this act,
Incontinent decreed
To give the earl this pleasant isle,
For his most valiant deed;
And forthwith did cause him then
For to be crowned king of Man,
Earl of Salisbury,
King of man by dignity:
Drums beating on a row,
Trumpets sounding as they go,
Tan ta ra ra ra tan.

This was the first king of Man,
That ever bore that name,
Knight of the princely garter blue,
An order of great fame,
Which brave king Edward did devise,
And with his person royalize:
Knights of the Garter are they call'd,
And eke at Windsor so install'd,
With princely royalty,
Great fame, and dignity,
This knighthood still is held.

LI.

The Rebellion of Wat Tyler, Jack Straw, and others, against King Richard the Second: how Sir William Walworth, Lord Mayor of London, stabbed Wat Tyler in Smithfield, for which the King knighted Sir William, with five aldermen more, causing a dagger to be added in the shield of the city arms.

[Reprinted from the Garland of Delight.]

WAT TYLER is from Dartford gone
And with him many proper men;
And he a captain is become,
Marching in field with fife and drum:

Jack Straw, another in like case,
From Essex flocks a mighty pace:
Hob Carter with his straggling train,
Jack Shepherd comes with him amain;

So doth Tom Miller in like sort,
As if he meant to take some fort:
With bows and bills, with spear and shield,
On Black-heath have they pitcht their field

An hundred thousand men in all,
Whose force is not accounted small;
And for King Richard did they send,
Much evil to him they did intend,

For the war, which our noble king
Upon the commons then did bring;
And now, because his royal grace
Denied to come, with their chase

They spoiled Southwark round about,
And took the marshal's prisoners out;
All those that in the king's-bench lay,
At liberty they set that day;

And then they marcht with one consent
Through London with a rude intent;
And to fulfil their lewd desire,
They set the Savoy all on fire:

And for the hate that they did bear
Unto the duke of Lancashire,
Therefore his house they burned quite,
Through envy, malice, and despite.

Then to the Temple did they turn,
The lawyers books eke did they burn,
And spoil'd their lodgings one by one,
And all they laid their hands upon.

Then unto Smithfield did they hie,
To St. John's place that stands thereby,
And set the same on fire flat,
Which burned seven days after that.

Unto the Tower of London then
Fast trooped these rebellious men,
And having entred soon the same,
With divers cries and mickle shame;

The grave lord chancellor then they took,
Amaz'd with fearful piteous look.
The lord high treasurer likewise they
Took from that place that present day;

And with their hooting, loud and shrill,
Cut off their heads on Tower-hill.
Into the city came they then,
Like lewd, disordered, frantick men.

They robb'd the churches every where,
And put the priests in deadly fear.
Into the counters then they get,
Where men in prison lay for debt;

They broke the doors, and let them out,
And threw the counter-books about,
Tearing and spoiling them each one,
And records all they light upon.

The doors of Newgate broke they down;
The prisoners ran about the town,
Forcing all the smiths they meet
To knock the irons from their feet;

And then, like villains void of awe,
Followed Wat Tyler and Jack Straw.
Although this outrage was not small,
The king gave pardon to them all.

So they would part home quietly:
But they his pardon did defie.
And being all in Smithfield then,
Even threescore thousand fighting men,

Which there Wat Tyler then did bring,
Of purpose for to meet the king;
And therewithall his royal grace,
Sent Sir John Newton to that place,

Unto Wat Tyler, willing him
To come and speak with our royal king.
But the proud rebel, in despight,
Did pick a quarrel with the knight.

The mayor of London* being by,
When he beheld this villainy,
Unto Wat Tyler he rode then,
Being in th'midst of all his men:

* Sir Wm. Walworth, citizen and fishmonger.

Saying, traitor, yield; 'tis best:
In the king's name I thee arrest.
And therewith to his dagger start,
He thrust the rebel to the heart;

Who falling dead upon the ground,
The same did all the host confound:
So down they threw their weapons all,
And humbly they for mercy call.
Thus did the proud rebellion cease,
And after followed joyful peace.

LII.

The Banishment of the Dukes of Hereford and Norfolk, in the time of King Richard the Second.

[From the Garland of Good-will.]

Two noble dukes of great renown,
That long had liv'd in fame,
Thro' hateful envy were cast down,
And brought to sudden shame.

The duke of Hereford was the one,
A prudent prince, and wise;
'Gainst whom such malice there was shown,
Which soon in sight did rise.

The duke of Norfolk, most untrue,
Declar'd unto the king,
The duke of Hereford greatly grew
In hatred of each thing,

Which by his grace was acted still
Against both high and low;
And how he had a trait'rous will,
His state to overthrow.

The duke of Hereford then, in haste,
Was sent for to the king;
And, by the lords in order plac'd,
Examin'd of each thing:

Who being guiltless of this crime,
Which was against him laid,
The duke of Norfolk at that time,
These words unto him said:

How canst thou, with a shameless face,
Deny a truth so stout;
And here, before his royal grace,
So falsly face it out?

Did not these wicked treasons pass,
When we together were;
How that the king unworthy was
The royal crown to bear?

Wherefore, my gracious lord, quoth he,
And you, his noble peers,
To whom I wish long life to be,
With many happy years:

I do pronounce before you all,
This treach'rous lord, that's here,
A traitor to our noble king;
As time shall shew it clear.

The duke of Hereford hearing that,
In mind was grieved much;
And did return this answer flat,
Which did duke Norfolk touch:

The term of traitor, truthless duke,
In scorn and great disdain,
With flat defiance to thy face,
I do return again:

And therefore, if it please your grace
To grant me leave (quoth he)
To combat with my deadly foe,
That here accuseth me;

I do not doubt but plainly prove,
That, like a perjur'd knight,
He hath most falsly sought my shame,
Against all truth and right.

The king did grant this just request,
And did therewith agree,
At Coventry, in August next,
This combat fought should be.

The dukes on sturdy steeds full stout,
In coats of steel most bright,
With spears in rests, did enter lists,
This combat fierce to fight.

The king then cast his warden down,
Commanding them to stay;
And with his lords he counsel took,
To stint that mortal fray.

At length unto these noble dukes
The king of heralds came,
And unto them with lofty speech
This sentence did proclaim:

Sir Henry Bolingbroke, this day,
The duke of Hereford here,
And Thomas Mowbray, Norfolk duke,
Valiantly did appear;

And having in honourable sort,
Repaired to this place;
Our noble king, for special cause,
Hath alter'd thus the case:

First, Henry duke of Hereford,
Ere fifteen days be past,
Shall 'part the realm on pain of death,
While ten years space doth last.

And Thomas duke of Norfolk, now,
That hath begun this strife,
And therefore no good proof can bring;
I say, for term of life,

By judgment of our sovereign lord,
Which now in place doth stand,
For evermore I banish thee
Out of thy native land;

Charging thee, on pain of death,
When fifteen days are past,
Thou never tread on English ground,
So long as life doth last.

Thus they were sworn before the king,
Ere they did farther pass,
The one should never come in place
Where as the other was.

Then both the dukes, with heavy hearts,
Were parted presently,
Their uncouth streams of froward chance
In foreign lands to try.

The duke of Norfolk coming then
Where he could shipping take,
The bitter tears fell down his cheeks,
And thus his moan did make :

Now let me sigh and sob my fill,
Ere I from hence depart,
That inward pangs with speed may burst
My sore afflicted heart.

Oh cursed man ! whose loathed life
Is held so much in scorn ;
Whose company is clean despis'd,
And left as one forlorn !

Now take thy leave, and last adieu,
Of this thy country dear ;
Which never more thou must behold,
Nor yet approach it near.

Now happy should I count myself,
If death my heart had torn ;
That I might have my bones entomb'd,
Where I was bred and born :

Or that by Neptune's wrathful rage
I might be forc'd to die,
Whilst that sweet England's pleasant banks
Did stand before mine eye:

How sweet a scent hath English ground
Within my senses now!
How fair unto my outward sight
Seems ev'ry branch and bough!

The fields and flow'rs, the streets and stones,
Seem such unto my mind,
That in all other countries, sure,
The like I ne'er shall find.

O that the sun, with shining face,
Would stay his steeds by strength;
That this same day might stretched be
To twenty years in length;

And that the true performing tide
Her hasty course would stay;
That Æolus would never yield
To bear me hence away!

That by the fountain of my eyes
The fields might water'd be;
That I might grave my grievous plaint
Upon each springing tree.

But time, I see, with eagle's wings
So swift doth fly away;
And dusky clouds begin to dim
The brightness of the day:

The fatal hour draweth on,
The winds and tides agree;
And now, sweet England, over soon
I must depart from thee.

The mariners have hoisted sail,
And call to catch me in;
And now, in woful heart, I feel
My torments to begin.

Wherefore, farewell for evermore,
Sweet England, unto thee;
And farewell, all my friends, which I
Again shall never see.

O England, here I kiss the ground
Upon my bended knee!
Whereby to shew to all the world
How dearly I love thee.

This being said, away he went,
As fortune did him guide;
And at the length, thro' grief of heart,
In Venice there he died.

The noble duke, in doleful sort,
Did lead his life in France;
And, at the last, the mighty Lord
Did him full high advance.

The lords of England afterwards
Did send for him again,
While that king Richard at the wars
In Ireland did remain;

Who, by the vile and great abuse
Which thro' his deeds did spring,
Deposed was; and then the duke
Was truly crowned king.

LIII.

Sir Richard Whittington's Advancement: being an historical Account of his Education, unexpected Fortune, Charity, &c.

There is something so fabulous, or at least, that has such a romantic appearance, in the history of Whittington, that we shall not relate it; but refer our readers to common tradition, or to the histories which are without any difficulty to be met with. Certain it is, that there was such a man; a citizen of London, by trade a mercer; and one who has left public edifices, and charitable works enough behind him, to transmit his name to posterity. Amongst others, he founded a house of prayer, with an allowance for a master, fellows, choristers, clerks, &c.

and an alms-house for thirteen poor men, called Whittington college. He entirely rebuilt the loathsome prison, which then was standing at the west gate of the city, and called it Newgate. He built the better half of St. Bartholomew's hospital, in West Smithfield; and the fine library in Grey Friars, now called Christ's Hospital: as also a great part of the east end of Guildhall, with a chapel and a library, in which the records of the city might be kept. He was chosen sheriff in the seventeenth year of the reign of king Richard the Second, and of the Christian æra 1393; William Stondon, by trade a grocer, being then mayor of London. After which he was knighted; and in the one and twentieth year of the same reign, he was chosen mayor; which honour was again conferred on him in the eighth year of king Henry the Fourth, and the seventh of king Henry the Fifth. It is said of him, that he advanced a very considerable sum of money towards carrying on the war in France, under the last monarch. He married Alice, the daughter of Hugh and Molde Fitzwarren: at whose house, traditions say, Whittington lived a servant, when he got his immense riches by venturing his cat in one of his master's ships. However, if we may give credit to his own will, he was a knight's son; and more obliged to an English king, and prince, than to any African monarch, for his riches; for when he founded Whittington college, and left a maintenance for so many people, as above related, they were, as Stow records it, (for this maintenance) bound to pray for the good estate of Richard Whittington, and Alice his wife, their founders; and for Sir William Whittington, and dame Joan his wife; and for Hugh Fitzwarren, and dame Molde his wife, the fathers and mothers of the said Richard Whittington and Alice his wife: for king Richard the Second, and Thomas of Woodstock, duke of Gloucester, special lords and promoters of the said Richard Whittington, &c.

HERE must I tell the praise
Of worthy Whittington,
Known to be in his days
Thrice lord-mayor of London.

But of poor parentage
Born was he, as we hear,
And in his tender age
Bred up in Lancashire.

Poorly to London then
Came up this simple lad;
Where, with a merchant-man,
Soon he a dwelling had;

And in a kitchen plac'd,
A seullion for to be;
Where a long time he pass'd
In labour drudgingly.

His daily service was
Turning at the fire;
And to scour pots of brass,
For a poor scullion's hire:

Meat and drink all his pay,
Of coin he had no store;
Therefore to run away,
In secret thought he bore.

So from the merchant-man
Whittington secretly
Towards his country ran,
To purchase liberty.

But as he went along,
In a fair summer's morn,
London's bells sweetly rung
Whittington back return:

Evermore sounding so,
Turn, again, Whittington;
For thou, in time, shalt grow
Lord-mayor of London.

Whereupon, back again
Whittington came with speed,
A servant to remain,
As the Lord had decreed.

Still blessed be the bells,
This was his daily song;
This my good fortune tells,
Most sweetly have they rung.

If God so favour me,
I will not prove unkind;
London my love shall see,
And my large bounties find.

But, see his happy chance!
This scullion had a cat,
Which did his state advance,
And by it wealth he gat.

His master ventur'd forth,
To a land far unknown,
With merchandize of worth,
As is in stories shown:

Whittington had no more
But this poor cat as then,
Which to the ship he bore,
Like a brave valiant man.

Vent'ring the same, quoth he,
I may get store of gold,
And mayor of London be,
As the bells have me told.

Whittington's merchandise,
Carried to a land
Troubled with rats and mice,
As they did understand;

The king of the country there,
As he at dinner sat,
Daily remain'd in fear
Of many mouse and rat.

Meat that on trenchers lay,
No way they could keep safe;
But by rats bore away,
Fearing no wand or staff;

Whereupon, soon they brought
Whittington's nimble cat;
Which by the king was bought,
Heaps of gold given for that.

Home again came these men,
With their ship laden so;
Whittington's wealth began
By this cat thus to grow:

Scullion's life he forsook,
To be a merchant good,
And soon began to look
How well his credit stood.

After that, he was chose
Sheriff of the city here,
And then full quickly rose
Higher, as did appear:

For, to the city's praise,
Sir Richard Whittington
Came to be in his days
Thrice mayor of London.

More his fame to advance,
Thousands he lent the king,
To maintain war in France,
Glory from thence to bring.

And after, at a feast
Which he the king did make,
He burnt the bonds all in jest,
And would no money take.

Ten thousand pounds he gave
To his prince willingly;
And would no penny have
For this kind courtesy.

As God thus made him great,
So he would daily see
Poor people fed with meat,
To shew his charity:

Prisoners poor cherish'd were,
Widows sweet comfort found:
Good deeds, both far and near,
Of him do still resound.

Whittington's college is
One of his charities;
Record reporteth this
To lasting memories.

Newgate he builded fair,
For prisoners to lie in;
Christ-church he did repair,
Christian love for to win.

Many more such like deeds
Were done by Whittington;
Which joy and comfort breeds,
To such as look thereon.

LIV.

A Song of the deposing of King Richard the Second, and how after many miseries he was murder'd in Pomfret Castle.

When Richard the Second in England was king,
And reign'd with honour and state,
Six uncles he had, his grandfather's sons,
King Edward that ruled of late:
All counsellors noble and sage;
Yet would he not hear
Their precepts dear,
So wilful he was, in this his young age.

A sort of brave gallants he kept in his court,
That trained him to wanton delights,
Which parasites pleased him better in mind,
Than all his best nobles and knights:
Ambition and avarice grew
So great in this land,
That still from his hand
A mass of rich treasure his parasites drew.

His peers and his barons dishonoured were;
And upstarts thus mounted on high:
His commons sore tax'd, his cities oppress'd,
Good subjects were nothing set by;
And what to his coffers did come,
He wantonly spent,
To please with content
His flattering upstarts, still sporting at home.

When thus unto ruin this kingdom began
To fall from the highest estate,
The nobles of England their prince's amiss,
By parliament soon did rebate:
And likewise those flatterers all,
They banish'd the court,
That made but a sport
To see this so famous a kingdom to fall.

But after these gallants degraded were thus,
  King Richard himself was put down,
And Bolingbroke, Lancaster's noble-born duke,
  By policy purchas'd his crown.
Thus civil wars here begun,
  That could have no end,
  By foe nor by friend,
Till seven kings reigns, with their lives, were outrun.

But Richard, the breeder of all these same broils,
  In prison was wofully cast,
Where long he complained, in sorrowful sort,
  Of kingly authority past:
No lords nor no subjects had he,
  No glory, no state,
  That early and late
Upon him attending had wont for to be.

His robes were converted to garments so old,
  That beggars would hardly them wear;
His diet no comfort at all to him brought,
  For he fed upon sorrow and care.
And from prison to prison was sent,
  Each day, and each night,
  To work him despight,
That, wearied with sorrows, he still might lament.

Poor king thus abused, he was at the last
To Pomfret in Yorkshire convey'd,
And there in a dungeon, full low in the ground,
Unpitied, he nightly was laid:
Not one for his misery grieved,
That late was in place
Of royallest grace,
Where still the distressed he kindly relieved.

King Henry, usurping then all his estate,
Could never in heart be content,
Till some of his friends in secresy sought
To kill him by cruel consent;
Who soon to Pomfret hied,
Whereas the fear,
That touch'd him so near,
They finish'd as soon as king Richard there died.

There died this good king, for murder'd he was,
That might well have lived full long,
Had not ill counsel betray'd his best good,
And done his high fortunes this wrong:
But blood for blood still calls,
No bloody-stain'd hand
Can long in this land
Stand surely, but soon into misery falls.

Lancaster thus the diadem gain'd,
And won his title by blood,
Which afterwards, by heaven's high power,
Not three generations stood,
But yielded to York again:
Thus fortune shows
Their proud overthrows,
That cunningly climb an imperial reign.

LV.

"The Siege of Harflet* and Batayl of Agencourt by King Henry 5."

[From the Appendix to Hearne's edition of Thomas de Elmham.]

Our king at Westminster he lay,
And his brethren everichone
And many other lordes, that is no nay,†
The king to them come anon:
Sirs, he said, by sweet Saint John,
To France I think to take the way,
To wreak me there upon my fone,‡
And get my land, if that I may,

* i. e. Harfleur. † That is certain. ‡ Foes.

Of good counsel I would you pray
What is your will that I shall do?
The duke of Clarence then gan say,
My Lord it is my will that it be so;
And other lordes answered thereto,
And said, "We hold it for the best
With you we be ready for to go,
While the breath will we lest."
"Gramercy, lordings," said our king,
"I shall you quite,* if I may.
I warn you, he said, both old and young,
Make you ready without delay,
At Southampton to take your day,
At Saint Peterys tide at Lamas,
By the grace of God, that is no nay,
Over the salt sea I think to pass.
The king let orden then full rath,†
Heartily and with good cheer;
His great guns and engines both,
And shipped them at London all y-fere,‡
With all his lordes sooth to say,
The mayor was ready, and met him there,
With the craftes of London in good array.
Hail, comely king, the mayor gan say,
The grace of God now be with thee,
And speed you well in your journey,§
Almighty God in Trinity,
And grant you evermore degree

*Recompense. †Speedily. ‡i.e.altogether. §Expedition.

To fell your enemies night and day,
Amen, said all the comente.
Gramercy, sirs, our king gan say,
To Saint Poulys then he held the way,
And offered there full worthily.
And so then to the queen, that is no nay;
He took his leave full reverently.
Throughout London then gan he ride,
To Saint George's he come in hie,*
And there he offer'd that eve tide,
And many other lordes that were him by,
To Southampton he went unto that strand,
For sooth he would no longer dwell,
Fifteen hundred ships there he found,
With streamers and top castles.
Lordes of this land our king 'gan sell
For a million of goods, as I here say.
Therefore their travail was quite full well,
They would have made a quaint affray.
The earl of March, the sooth to say,
That is gracious in all degree,
He warned the king, that is no nay,
How he was sold certainly.
Sir, he said, there is such a man
This day think you to betray.
Gramercy, cousin, said our king so free,
Mine own true knight by God very.
They that had him sold, they sung well-a-way!
Their lives they lost full soon anon.

* i. e. in haste.

Our king yed * with royal array
And sailed far on the salt sea,
To Seine's mouth till that he come,
And landed at Kedcans,† the sooth to say,
On our Lady-day eve the 'sumption ‡
In Normandy his banners he gan display,
And to Harflete ‖ he took the way.
He mustered fair before the town,
And other lordes that is no nay,
With banners bright and pennon
And there they pyght § their tents adown
That were on brows with armies gay.
First the king's tent with the crown,
And other lordes with good array
" My brother Clarence," our king gan say,
" The t'other side of the town ye shall keep,
" With my daughter and with her maidens gay,
" To wake the Frenchmen of their sleep.
" London," he said, " shall with them meet,
" My guns shall lie up on this green,
" For they shall play with Harflete
" A game at the tennis, as I ween,
" Mine engines that be of tree so clean,
" They shall be set beside this hill,
" Over all Harflets that they may see,
" To mark the chase ¶ when they play well.
" Go we to game," said good grace,

* Went. † Kidcaur. ‡ Assumption. ‖ Harfleur. § Pitched.
¶ An expression borrowed from the game of tennis.

" My children be ready everichone.
Every great gun, that there was,
In their mouth they had a stone.
The captain of Harflete soon anon
To our king sent he anon,
To wete * what was his will to done,†
That was come thither with such a main.
" Deliver me this town" our king gan say,
" Nay sir," he said: " By Saint Dennis
I shall it get, if that I may,
By the grace of God at my tennis.
My players that I have hither y-brought
Balles beth ‡ of stones round
By the help of him that me dear bought,
They shall beat your walls out the ground."
The Frenchmen cried a mound, a mound. §
" This town" they said " behoveth we to keep."
The king said, " he would not free the ground
Or ‖ he had gotten now Harflet."
Trial many our king did make,
And thorow ¶ the dyke they gan pass.
The Frenchmen spied their walls gan shake,
And countermined again in that place.
Together therein they gan race.
It is great frad** to see them fight.
Prisoners our men there they did take,

* To know. † i. e. To be done. ‡ Be or are.
§ i. e. à monter à monter, to mount, to mount [the battlements.]
‖ i. e. till. ¶ i. e. Through. ** Very frightful.

And out of the mind* they had them dight.†
The Frenchmen then flew at a styght, ‡
To see our men so strong and stout.
They feared the many with main and might
With smolder and stench they drave them out.
Listen lordes all about
Of Pamplys § shall ye hear.
The balls of them lordly gan rout,
Among the houses of Harflete they were.
Then said good grace, Then
Have I do fellows, go we to game.
Among the houses the balls ran,
And made many a Frenchman lame,
XV ‖ before then said London in same
His ball full fair he gan throw
Against the steeple of stone rough,
The bells they rung up a row
XXX is mine, said Messenger,
I will it win if that I may.
The wall that was y-made full sure,
He brake it down, the sooth to say.
The king's daughter said, hark how they play!
Help my maidens at this tide,
XLV that is no nay.
The walls they beat down on every side,

* i. e. mine. † Taken.

‡ With great haste or violence. Mr. Douce informs me that stithe is still used in this sense in the provinces.

§ Of Palm-plays, i. e. tennis, from the French jeu de Paulme.

‖ 15, 30, 45, are points at the game of tennis.

The Englishmen said, too long we abide
Let us go in on ascent.
Wheresoever the balls gan glide,
The houses of Harflete they gan all to rent.
An Englishman the bulwark brent.*
Women cried, Alas! that they were born.
The Frenchmen said Now be we schent.†
For us now this town is y-lore,‡
It is best that we therefore,
That we sue the king of grace
That he will assay us no more
For to destroy us in this place.
But § the Dolphin ‖ rescue us in this case,
This town to him deliver will we.
A messenger they let make,
And to the king they come in hie,¶
Lord Gaucort certainly,
For he was captain in that place,
And the lord Vike come they,
And other also both more and less.
To fore the king when were come
I wot they set them on their knee.
Hail, comely prince, said that maym-bras **
The grace of God now it is with thee.
For trewys †† we would seek thee,
For‡‡ that it be Sunday at noon,
And unless we rescued may be

* Burnt. † Undone. ‡ Lost.
§ i. e. unless. ‖ Dauphin. ¶ Haste.
** An epithet applied to the captain, resembling fier-a-bras.
†† Truce. ‡‡ Till

We shall to you deliver this town.
The king then said to them full soon,
I grant you grace all at this tide.
One of you go forth anon,
The remnant with me shall abide,
On to you for to ride.
He wend the Dolfin to have found there right.
He was gone, he durst not bide.
Of help the captain he sought that tide,
Harflete for us is lost for ay,
The walles bene* beat on every side,
We may it no longer keep, by God veray.
Of good council I would you pray,
What is your will that I shall do?
We must give him battle by Sunday,
Or else to him deliver the town.
The lords of Rone together gan rowne,†
And bade the town he should up yield.
" The king of England, fierce as lion,
We will not meet him in the field,"
The captain went again without letting,‡
Before our king on knees gan fall.
Hail, he said, comely king
Most worthy prince in the world royal,
Sir, I have y-brought you the keys all
Of Harflete, that fair city.
All is your own, tower, town, and hall,
At your will, lord, for to be.

* Being † Whisper. ‡ Hindrance.

I-thanked be God, then said our king,
And Mary, mother that is so free.
Mine uncle Dorset, without letting,
Captain of Harflete ye shall be.
And all that is in that city
With you still it shall abide,
To amend the town in all the gre.
Then I now shall with you ride,
To see the town there overall.
Wife ne child let none abide,
But have them out both great and small,
And let stuff the town on every side,
With Englishmen therein to be.
They left no French blood within the wall,
But them fore all the commonalty.
VIII C men and children a man might see,
When they went out, for they gan weep.
The great guns and engines truly
They were brought into Harflete.
Our king into the town yede,*
And rest him there as his will was.
Sirs, he said, so God me speed,
To Calais ward I think to pass.

" Here endet the Segge of Harflet."

* Went.

"Be gynnyth Batayllc of Agynk Corte."

When Harflete was got, that royal town,
Throughout the grace of God omnipotent,
Our king he made him ready bound,*
And to Calais-ward full fair went.
My brother Gloucester verament
You shall ride all by my side.
My cousin York you take intent,
Forsooth ye shall also this tide,
My cousin Huntington shall with me ride.
The earl of Suffolk, that is so free,
The earl of Oxford shall not abide.
He shall come forth with his many,
The young earl of Devonshire certainly,
The lord of Clifford that never would fail,
The lord Cawse that is doughty,
And also Sir John Cornwall,
Sir Gilbert Umfervil will ons avail.
The Lord Whylle, so God me speed,
Sir Thomas Erpingham will not fail.
Ne Sir William Boncer, when we have need.
Toward Calais full fair they yede,†

* Ready bound, a pleonasm. † Went.

Into the country of Picardy,
And out of Normandy then they yede,
Now Christ save all this company.
Our king rode forth, blessed he be,
He spared neither dale ne down,
By towns great and castles high,
Till he came to the water of Some.
The Frenchmen the bridges had thrown down,
There over the water he might not pass.
Our king he made him ready bound,
And to the water of Tyve he come in haste,
Our king forth with good speed
Into the county of Cornwall,
To Agincourt now as we read,
There as our king and his battle
By the water of Swerdes without fail
The Frenchmen our king they gan espy,
And they thought him [to] assail
All in the field certainly.
The lord Haly, a true knight,
Unto our king he come in hie,
And said, Sire, yield you without fight,
And save yourself and your meyny.*
And our king bad him go his way in hie,
And bide no longer in my sight.
By the help of God now full of might,
The Frenchmen had our king a bount taste
With battles huge on every side.
The duke of Orleans said, I am Cryste

* Followers.

The king of England shall with us abide,
Who gave him leave this way to ride?
Therefore, he said, I shall be hanged
Or* than he come at Calais.
The duke of Brabant answered then,
And said, By God in Trinity,
They be so few of Englishmen,
I have no daynte† them to see.
Alas, he said, what needs us to flee?
So many of us for to come here.
XX of them shall not have one prisoner.
The duke of Bourbon answered, By Saint Dennis,
And other lordes many one,
We shall go play them at dice,
These lords of England. Everichone
The gentlemen, they said, By sweet Saint John,
That archers they sold full feyere plenty,
That six all of the best bowmen
All for a blank of our money.
The duke of Alenson said, with astrene‡ cheer,
A vow to God shall I make,
To take the king of England to me prisoner,
Or else be slain for his sake.
His banner, he said, I shall down shake,
In field this day, if I may stand.
This other many I shall gar§ quake,
And strike of every archer his right-hand.

* Sooner.
† Daynte, curiosity or inclination, from the old French.
‡ With kindred or similar gaiety. § Make.

And then answered the duke of Bar,
With wordes that were much of pride.
By God, he said, I will not spare
Over yonder Englishmen for to ride.
An that they will us abide,
We shall overthrow all y-fere.
Go and see them at this tide,
And come home again till * our devere †
Our gracious king that is so good,
He battled him royally.
Stakes he let hew down in a wood,
And pyght ‡ before our archers so free.
The Frenchmen our ordinance gan espy,
They that were busked to ride
They lighted adoun with sorrow in heye
And upon their feet they gan abide.
The duke of York then full soon
Before our king he fell on knee,
My liege lord grant me a boon,
Then aware this day that ye grant me,
Before you in this field
By my banner slain will I bee,
Rather than to move my back or yield.
Gramercy, cousin, said our king,
Think on right of merry England,
And then he gave them all his blessing,
And bade the duke he should upstand.
Christ, he said, that schepe § both sea and land,

* To. † Duty. ‡ Pitched. § Shaped or formed.

And art a king of might,
This day hold on us thy holy hand,
And speed me well in all my right.
Help, Saint George, our lady knight,
Saint Edward that is so free,
Our Lady, God's mother, bright,
And Saint Thomas of Canterbury,
And bad all men blithely to be.
And said, Fellows we shall well speed,
Every man in his degree,
I shall quite full well your meed.
Our king said, Fellows what time of day?
Sire, they said, it is nigh prime.
Go we to this ilke jornaye,
By the grace of God it is good time.
For all the saints that live in shrine,
To God for us they be praying.
The religious of England all by one thing,
Ora pro nobis for us they sing.
Our king kneeled down all in that stound,*
And all the Englishmen in each side,
And thrice there they kissed the ground,
And on their feet gan they stand up right.
Christ, said our king, as I am thy knight,
And let never that good realm for me have hindring,
Only ne this day will I never be taken,
Avaunt banner without letting,
Saint George before any of mine,

* At that time.

The banner of the Trinity, that is heaven-king,
And Saint Edward's banner at this tide,
Our Lady, he said, that is heaven-queen,
Mine own banner with her shall abide,
The Frenchmen all bedene,*
Saint George before our king they did see,
They trumped up full merrily.
The great battle together yed.†
Our archers they shot full heartily,
They made the Frenchmen fast to bleed,
Their arrows they went with full good speed,
Our enemies with them they gan down throw,
Through breast-plates, habourgenes,‡ and basnets, §
XIM was slain on a row,
Denters ‖ of death men might well deem,
So fiercely in field they gan fight,
The heve up on their helmets scheen
With axes and swords bright,
When our arrows were at a flight,
Among the Frenchmen was a well sorry cheer,
There was to bring of gold buckled so bright,
That a man might hold a strong armour.
Our gracious king, men might know,
That day fought with his own hand,
The earls were discomfited up on a row,
That he had slain understand.
He there schevyd our other lords of this land,

* Together. † Went. ‡ Coats of mail.
§ Helmets. ‖ Strokes.

Forsooth, that was a full fair day,
Therefore all England may this sing,
Laus Deo we may well say,
The Duke of Gloucester that is no nay,
That day full worthily he wrought,
On every side he made good way,
The Frenchmen fast to ground they brought,
The earl of Huntington spared nought,
The Earl of Oxford laid on also,
The young earl of Devonshire he ne rought,*
The Frenchmen fast to ground gan go,
Our Englishmen they were full seker do,
And fierce to fight as any lion,
Basnets bright they crazed in two,
And beat the French banners adoun,
As thunder strokes there was a sound,
Of axes and spears they gan glide.
The lords of France lost their renown,
With grisly wounds they gan abide.
The Frenchmen for all their pride,
They fell down all at a flight,
"Je me rends," they cried on every side,
Our Englishmen they understood nought aright,
Their poll-axes out of their hands they twyght, †
And laid them along straight upon the grass,
They spared neither duke, earl, nor knight,
Therefore say we, Deo gratias.
And when that battle scomfit was
On the Friday at after-noon,

* Cared not. † Twisted.

Our king to his longing his way he took,
There as he lay the night before,
Till it was Saturday by the morn.
Throughout the field he rode again.
Now shall ye hear of the lords that were forlorn,
The earl of Mereke that there was slain,
The earl of Rossey, the sooth to say,
And also the earl of Bourbon,
The earl of Drewis went never away,
The earl of Danmartyne died that day,
The earl of Saynys with all his gent,
The earl of Grawnte that without delay,
And also the archbishop of Sens,
The lord Raufermont was nought absent,
The lord Daufy, so God me speed,
The lord Philip Daufy of Amiens,
And the lord Amerey to ground is *yeld,
The lord Robart ffret all in that tide,
The lord Warren was slain in that battle,
The lord Gremeron in that retaylle,
The lord Valen hewed that was so stout,
The lord Mantance laid down the selle
And the lord Gonsay for all his roughte
The lord Gonderet Gantlonyd lout,
The lord Donggardin that was so gay,
The lord Wremys that was so stout,
The lord Mount-Goyl, the sooth to say,
The lord Quenys, as I you tell,
With the lord Dampoth was slain that day,

* Yeld, i. e. felled.

And the lord Gengeret of Dalfour,
The duke of Orleans that was full wo,
That day he was taken prisoner,
The Duke of Braband slain was there,
The duke of Bar fast him lie,
The duke of Alenson went never far,
Ne the earl of Nevers certainly,
Sir Bursygand began yield.
And thus our king conquered the field,
Through the grace of God omnipotent,
He took his prisoners, young and old,
And to Calais full fair he went.

" Here Endythe the Batayll of Agyng Corte."

LVI.

THE VICTORY OF AGINCOURT.

A COUNCIL grave our king did hold,
With many a lord and knight;
That they might truly understand,
That France did hold his right.

Unto the king of France therefore
Ambassadors were sent,
That he might fully understand
His mind and his intent:

Desiring him in friendly wise,
His lawful right to yield;
Or else he vow'd, by dint of sword
To win the same in field.

The king of France with all his lords,
Which heard his message plain,
Unto our brave ambassadors
Did answer in disdain;

And feign'd our king was yet too young,
And of too tender age;
Therefore we weigh not of his war,
Nor fear we his courage.

His knowledge is in feats of arms
As yet but very small:
His tender joints much fitter were
To toss a tennis ball.

A tun of tennis balls therefore,
In pride and great disdain,
He sent unto our noble king,
To recompense his pain.

Which answer when our king did hear,
He waxed wroth in heart;
And said he would such balls provide,
Should make all France to smart.

An army then our king did raise,
Which was both good and strong;
And from Southampton is our king
With all his navy gone.

In France he landed safe and sound,
With all his warlike train;
And to the town of Harfleur straight
He marched up a-main:

But when he had besieg'd the same,
Against their fenced walls,
To batter down their stately towers,
He sent his English balls.

This done, our noble English king
March'd up and down the land;
And not a Frenchman for his life
Durst once his force withstand,

Until he came to Agincourt;
Where as it was his chance
To find the king in readiness
With all his power of France.

A mighty host he had prepar'd
Of armed soldiers then;
Which were no less, by just account,
Than forty thousand men.

Which sight did much amaze our king;
For he and all his host
Not passing fifteen thousand had,
Accounted at the most.

The king of France, which well did know
The number of our men,
In vaunting pride unto our prince
Did send a herald then;

To understand what he would give
For ransom of his life,
When he in field should taken be
Amidst their bloody strife.

And then our king, with cheerful heart,
This answer soon did make;
And said, Before this comes to pass,
Some of their hearts shall quake.

And to their proud presumptuous prince
Declare this thing, quoth he,
Mine own heart's blood shall pay the price;
None else he gets of me.

With that bespoke the duke of York;
O noble king, quoth he,
The leading of this battle brave
Vouchsafe to give to me.

God a mercy, cousin York, quoth he,
I grant thee thy request;
Then march thou on courageously,
And I will lead the rest.

Then came the bragging Frenchmen down
With greater force and might;
With whom our noble king began
A hard and cruel fight.

The archers they discharg'd their shafts,
As thick as hail from sky;
That many a Frenchman in the field
That happy day did die.

Ten thousand men that day were slain
Of enemies in the field
And as many prisoners
That day were forc'd to yield.

Thus had our king a happy day,
And victory over France;
And brought them quickly under foot,
That late in pride did prance.

The Lord preserve our noble king,
And grant to him likewise
The upper hand and victory
Of all his enemies.

LVII.

A Song of the Wooing of Queen Catherine, widow of Henry the Fifth, by Owen Tudor, a young gentleman of Wales; translated out of the Welsh.

OWEN TUDOR.

I SALUTE thee, sweet princess, with title of grace;
For Cupid commands me in heart to embrace
Thy honours, thy virtues, thy favour, and beauty,
With all my true service, my love and my duty.

QUEEN CATHERINE.

Courteous kind gentleman, let me request,
How comes it that Cupid hath wounded thy breast,
And chain'd thy heart's liking my servant to prove,
That am but a stranger in this thy kind love?

TUDOR.

If but a stranger, yet love hath such power,
To lead me here kindly into the queen's bower;
Then do not, sweet princess, my good-will forsake,
When nature commands thee a true love to take.

QUEEN.

So royal of calling and birth am I known,
That matching unequal, my state's overthrown:
My titles of dignity thereby I lose,
To wed me and bed me my equal I'll chuse.

TUDOR.

No honours are lost (queen) in chusing of me,
For I am a gentleman born by degree;
And favours of princes my state may advance,
In making me noble and fortunate chance.

QUEEN.

My robes of rich honours, most brave to behold,
Are all o'er imbossed with silver and gold;
Not therewith adorned, I lose my renown,
With all the brave titles that wait on a crown.

TUDOR.

My country, sweet princess, more pleasure affords,
Than can be expressed by me here in words;
Such kindly contentment by nature there springs,
That hath been well liked of queens and of kings.

QUEEN.

My courtly attendants are trains of delight,
Like stars of fair heaven all shining most bright:
And those that live daily such pleasures to see,
Suppose no such comfort in country can be.

TUDOR.

In Wales we have fountains, no crystals more clear,
Where murmuring musick we daily may hear,
With gardens of pleasure, and flowers so sweet,
Where true love with true love may merrily meet.

QUEEN.

But there is no tilting nor tournaments bold,
Which gallant young ladies desire to behold,
No masks, nor no revels, where favours are worn,
By knights or by barons without any scorn.

TUDOR.

Our May-pole at Whitsuntide maketh good sport,
And moves as sweet pleasures as your's do in court,
Where, on the green dancing for garland and ring,
Maidens make pastime and sports for a king.

QUEEN.

But when your brave young men and maidens do meet,
Whilst silver-like melody murmuring keeps,
Your musick is clownish, and soundeth not sweet,
And locks up your senses in heavenly sleeps.

TUDOR.

Our harps and our tabors, and sweet humming drones,
For thee, my sweet princess, make musical moans:
Our Morris Maid-Marians desire to see
A true-love knot tied between thee and me.

QUEEN.

No pleasure in country by me can be seen,
That have been maintain'd so long here a queen,
And fed on the blessings that daily were given
Into my brave palace, by angels from heaven.

TUDOR.

Our green-leav'd trees will dance with the wind,
Where birds sit rejoicing according to kind:
Our sheep with our lambs will skip and rebound,
To see thee come tripping along on the ground.

QUEEN.

What if a kind princess should so be content,
By meekness thus moved to give her consent,
And humble her honours, imbase her degree,
To tie her best fortunes, brave Tudor, to thee?

TUDOR.

If to a kingdom I born were by birth,
And had at commandment all nations on earth,
Their crowns and their scepters should lie at thy feet,
And thou be my empress, my darling so sweet.

QUEEN.

I fear not to fancy thy love-tempting tongue,
For Cupid is coming, his bow very strong;
Queen Venus, once mistress of heart-wishing pleasure,
We over-kind women repent us at leisure.

TUDOR.

May never fair morning shew forth his bright beams,
But cover my falshood with greatest extremes,
If not as the turtle I lie with my dove,
My gentle kind princess, my lady, my love.

QUEEN.

Hie then into Wales, and our wedding provide,
For thou art my bridegroom, and I'll be thy bride;
Get gloves and fine ribbons, with bride-laces fair,
Of silk and of silver, for ladies to wear.

TUDOR.

With garlands of roses our housewifely wives,
To have them adorn'd most lovingly strives;
Their bride-cakes be ready, our bag-pipes do play,
Whilst I stand attending to lead thee the way.

BOTH TOGETHER.

Then mark how the notes of our merry town-bells,
Our ding-dong of pleasures most cheerfully tells;
Then ding-dong, fair ladies, and lovers all true,
This ding-dong of pleasure may satisfy you.

LVIII.

CUPID'S REVENGE.

The editor of the collection of Old Ballads published in 1723, is of opinion that this piece was written upon the marriage of king Henry the Sixth, and supports his hypothesis by an elaborate train of reasons, but his arguments, however ingenious, appear to be unfounded, for a very slight comparison will convince the reader, that the ensuing production is merely a parody of the ballad of king Cophetua and the Beggar-maid, from which not only the story but much of the diction is borrowed. King Cophetua is reprinted in Percy's Reliques.

A KING once reign'd beyond the seas,
As we in ancient stories find,
Whom no fair face could ever please,
He cared not for womankind:

He despis'd the sweetest beauty,
And the greatest fortune too;
At length he married to a beggar;
See what Cupid's dart can do!

The blinded boy that shoots so trim,
Did to his closet-window steal;
And drew a dart, and shot at him,
And made him soon his power to feel.

He that never car'd for women,
But did females ever hate,
At length was smitten, wounded, swooned,
For a beggar at his gate.

For mark what happen'd on a day,
As he look'd from his window high,
He spied a beggar all in grey,
With two more in her company:

She his fancy soon inflam'd,
And his heart was grieved sore;
What! must I have her, court her, crave her?
I, that never lov'd before?

This noble prince of high renown,
Did to his chamber straight repair,
And on his couch he laid him down,
Oppress'd with love-sick grief and care.

Ne'er was a monarch so surpriz'd;
Here I lie her captive slave!
But I'll to her, court her, woo her;
She must heal the wound she gave.

Then to his palace-gate he goes:
The beggars crave his charity;
A purse of gold to them he throws;
With thankful hearts away they hie.

But the king he call'd her to him,
Tho' she was but poor and mean:
His hand did hold her, while he told her,
She should be his stately queen.

At this she blushed scarlet-red,
And on this mighty king did gaze!
Then straight again as pale as lead;
Alas, she was in such amaze!

Hand in hand they walk'd together;
And the king did kindly say,
That he'd respect her: straight they deck'd her
In most sumptuous rich array.

He did appoint the wedding-day;
And likewise then commanded straight
The noble lords and ladies gay
Upon his gracious queen to wait.

She appear'd a splendid beauty,
All the court did her adore;
And in a marriage, with a carriage,
As if she'd been a queen before.

Her fame thro' all the realms did ring,
Altho' she came of parents poor:
She, by her sov'reign lord the king,
Did bear one son, and eke no more.

All the nobles were well pleased,
And the ladies frank and free;
For her behaviour always gave her
Title to her dignity.

At length the king and queen were laid
Together in a silent tomb;
Their royal son their sceptre sway'd,
Who govern'd in his father's room.

Long in glory did he flourish,
Wealth and honour to increase;
Still possessing such a blessing,
That he liv'd and reign'd in peace.

END OF VOL. II.

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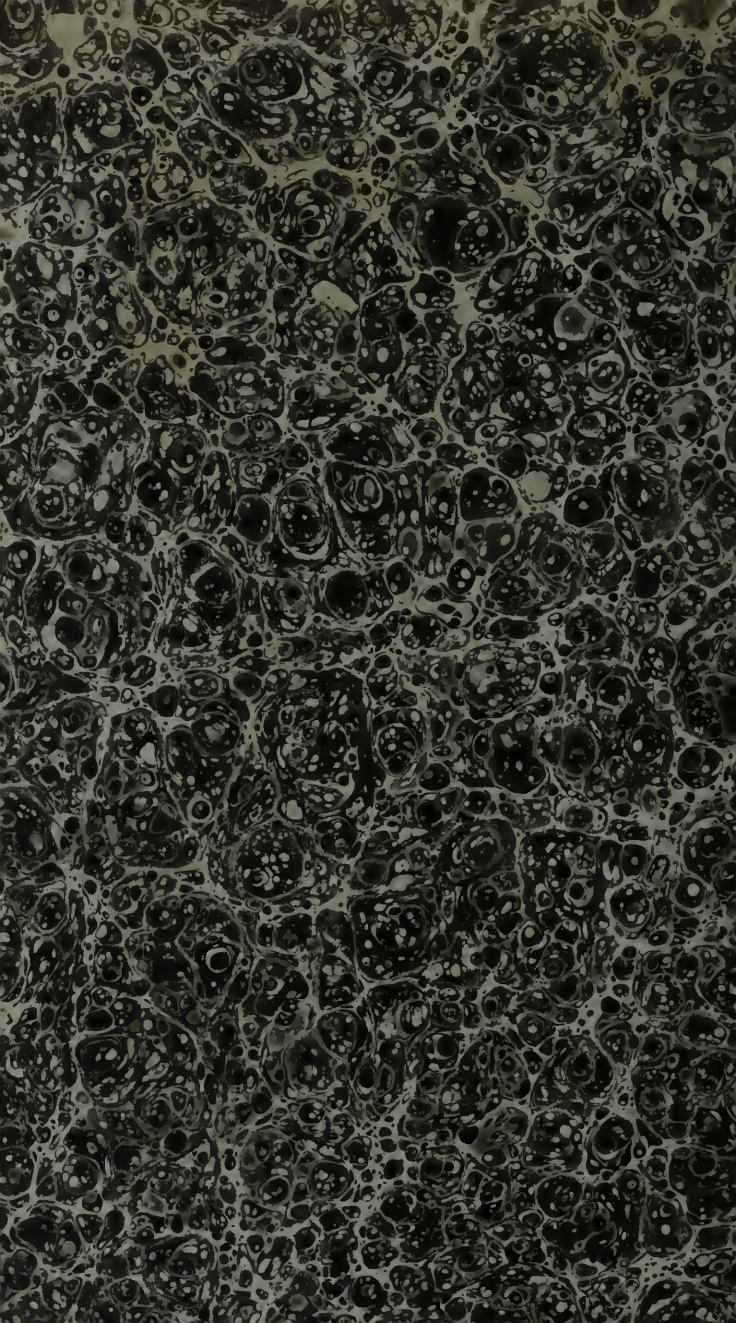

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